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The business of sharing

Sharing economy is anything but a new phenomenon. Several industry players have welcomed this strategy with open arms and its success has taken no time to create a stir. While on one hand it poses a threat to traditional travel agencies, it has definitely opened avenues manifold for those who have ventured into adopting this business model.

AHANA GURUNG



Sandeep Dwivedi
COO
InterGlobe Technology Quotient

“ On the principle of ‘unused value is wasted value,’ the key players of sharing economy are growing at a stupendous rate. Of course, the traditional industries have suffered due to the upswing of shared economy - especially in the travel industry. In the present scenario, it has helped commoners to find pocket friendly accommodation and travel solutions even while going abroad. However, this does not mean that traditional businesses should remain passive. The change in scenario calls for reinvention. ”



Ankush Nijhawan
Co-founder & CEO
Travel Boutique Online

the face of the travel industry and maximise resources as well as opportunities for the people involved in the sector. ”

“ Sharing economy is a boon because it's getting people used to the Internet and that's the way the world is moving forward. Currently, every development points towards technology which is not only setting the bar high in the industry, but also brings convenience to the game. However, it puts pressure on traditional agents to keep evolving and adopting technology so that we can be on par with international standards. This revolution can change ”



Raja Natesan
CEO, UniGlobe
Travel (South Asia)

“ The positives of sharing economy would of course be the most efficient utilisation of resources and assets with the best possible quality. Does this mean that there will be pressure on people to perform? Yes, but, I also think it will lead to more creativity and better quality in services, more openness and transparency. In India, however, any change is regarded with scepticism. With the sharing economy, the early adapters and adopters will benefit greatly. ”



Dipak Deva
Managing Director
Travel Corporation India

“ The emergence of these new business models are definitely a boon to the travel industry. An increase in customer base is expected and the sharing economy will definitely create new customers, who may start spending on travel using this affordable way of travelling. This also means that people will tend to travel more. Ease of booking using these models will actually make last-minute travel, weekend travel or extension of business trips to a holiday much easier. It will create employment opportunity and add another source of income for locals in tourist destinations. It might pose some tough competition to existing players in the travel industry, but the net result will be positive for the sector as a whole. ”

“ Sharing economy as a concept is here to stay. It is an opportunity for entrepreneurs in the travel industry to partner and grow the pie. Cost of travel will come down and more people would travel. What's driving this change is a fundamental shift in approach in doing business at a lower cost and this is possible with technological and social advancement. You will see an exponential growth in travel and this would benefit the travel industry in a big way. It's all about keeping pace with trends and reaping the benefits of it. ”



Karan Anand
Head-Relationships
Cox & Kings

Need for consolidated South

While most tour operators claim that Kerala rules the roost in attracting tourists to South India, other states in the region also need to up their game to promote and develop tourism products. TRAVTALK gauges the industry's opinion on how South India is faring in terms of tourism.

NISHA VERMA



Ganesh Rao
General Manager
Ascon Travel

“ **Focused approach**
There are many things in South India to attract tourists — lovely beaches, temples, backwaters. Roads are pretty good, especially the ones connecting Hyderabad to Bengaluru to Chennai. However, there is a need to market these states well. Instead of promoting entire country as Incredible India, they need to segregate and give South India a special focus. ”



E. M. Najeeb
Chairman & MD
Air Travel Enterprises Group

should be rationalised. This would act as an opportunity to develop tourism. ”

“ **Rationalise taxes**
South India has always been called ‘Sunny South India’ and has a lot of variety and attractions to offer. All the South Indian states have got substantial funds for tourism promotion, infrastructure development and festivals. Tourism transport in South India is very expensive, owing to high taxes imposed by the states. They should have better coordination for smooth travel within these states, and taxes ”



Deepak Bhatnagar
Managing Director
Aamantaran Travel

said that, I would say that there is huge potential in the South which needs to be explored. ”

“ **Multilingual guides**
In the South, we mostly do a two week itinerary with Tamil Nadu which finishes in Kerala. Karnataka is also getting attention as it can be combined with Goa. However, the infrastructure and distances are still a matter of concern. But the biggest challenge in South India is the availability of guides who are thorough with the languages. Those who are, they like to work on their own terms, which may not be practical. Having ”



Paramjit S. Duggal
Executive Director
Minar Travels

“ **Unite to promote**
After Kerala, Karnataka is the next big thing with Hampi being much in demand. While the South Indian states are doing marketing, they are only participating in local trade fairs, and not the international ones. And all the states are participating independently. They should sit together and decide to market themselves as a region, so that they can create more awareness. ”



Homa Mistry
CEO
Trail Blazer Tours India

“ **Invest in promotion**
We've sold Golden Triangle for many years and South India is now picking up. Even the margins are better in South India as compared to North India. It is much beyond Kerala and one can actually get a 14 day itinerary which includes Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Cochin. All the states are doing very well in terms of marketing. However, it is the advertising part where they are lacking. ”



P. P. Khanna
Director
Diplomatic Travel Point

“ **Explore beyond Kerala**
The most popular destination in South India is Kerala, which is doing very well because of its marketing campaign. We are thankful that Kerala Travel Mart (KTM) is organised every two years. Other South Indian states should also organise such marts. Puducherry, Mahablipuram and Tamil Nadu are popular destinations. In fact, it is the safest region in India and gets a huge number of domestic tourists. ”

Transnational Buddhist Circuit

The Indo-Nepal Buddhist Circuit will encompass Bodh Gaya, Vaishali, Rajgir and Kushinagar in Bihar, Sarnath and Shravasti in Uttar Pradesh, along with Kapilavastu and Lumbini in Nepal.

AHANA GURUNG

The Ministry of Tourism will soon roll out the first transnational Buddhist Circuit between India and Nepal as part of the route under the Swadesh Darshan scheme. While a major part of the Buddhist relics and pilgrimage sites are situated in India, a huge chunk encompasses Nepal, which is also the birth place of Lord Buddha.

Shedding light on the development, **Suman Billa**, Joint Secretary – Tourism, said, “We want to tap the huge segment of Buddhist pilgrims that visit other countries in South East Asia and give them an unparalleled experience by opening the routes to neighbouring

“We want to tap the huge segment of Buddhist pilgrims that visit other countries in South East Asia and give them an unparalleled experience by opening the routes to neighbouring countries. India does have a lot of sacred Buddhist sites but with Nepal involved, the journey becomes all the more comprehensive and detailed.”

Suman Billa
Joint Secretary
Ministry of Tourism, Government of India



countries. India does have a lot of sacred Buddhist sites but with Nepal involved, the journey becomes all the more comprehensive and detailed.”

Billa further stated that several other SAARC nations

have since shown interest in this initiative and the ministry plans to take discussions further with them. They are also keen on including Sri Lanka to the circuit since the island nation has a rich history of Buddhism.

The map of the circuit proposed by the ministry comprises Bodh Gaya, Vaishali, Rajgir and Kushinagar in Bihar; Sarnath and Shravasti in Uttar Pradesh; along with Kapilavastu and Lumbini in Nepal.

However, Billa mentioned that several bottlenecks need to be cleared to ensure the integrated circuit runs in a smooth manner. “Currently, the visa is the main issue but since double entry for eTV is on the cards, this issue is more or less addressed. Travel agents and tour operators also need to create relevant and offbeat itineraries that will instantly attract more tourists.” He added that infrastructure is being developed with allocated funds under the government’s Swadesh Darshan scheme.

In a bid to promote the country’s potential for Buddhist pilgrimage, the ministry will also be organising the International Buddhist Conclave from October 3-5, 2016,

in Varanasi, Sarnath and Bodh Gaya. The three-day event is expected to host as many as 500 monks from ASEAN countries.

MOT Highlights

- ✦ International Buddhist Conclave from October 3-5, 2016
- ✦ ‘Short term yoga plan’ activity box to be included in Tourist Visa and e-Tourist Visa
- ✦ Ministry of Tourism forms action plan for B&B and Homestays
- ✦ MoU between India and the US to facilitate hassle-free entry of Indians into the US at selected airports

TRAVTALK photography contest



Jigar Kishor Somani, Founder, Holiday Exotica, based in Ahmedabad, has won the TRAVTALK Photography Contest. The winning shot — Hot Air Balloon — was clicked by Somani from a Balloon Safari in Cappadocia, Turkey. The photo was clicked during sunrise, giving it the beautiful silhouette effect, on March 12, 2015.

TAFI elections on June 30

The Travel Agents Federation of India will be conducting its national team election along with its Annual General Meeting (AGM) by June 30.

HAZEL JAIN

After completing all its chapter elections across India, the Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) is now gearing up for its AGM and national elections, which will be held on June 30 in



Rajat Bagaria
Member
TAFI National Managing Committee

Ahmedabad. **Rajat Bagaria**, Member, TAFI National Managing Committee, revealed, “All our chapters need to complete their accounts and conduct their AGM before the national team can do our AGM and elections. June 15 is the last date for filing the nominations and June 25 is the last date for withdrawal. The final list of nominees will be out on June 26. If there is more than one person standing for the same post, then we will have elections. Else the person will be chosen unanimously. So we will decide if we need to have elections on June 26.”

Pradip Lulla, National General Secretary, TAFI, add-

ed, “By July, we will be able to finally roll out our Joint Bank Guarantee Scheme.”

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BRICS convention in Khajuraho

The Ministry of Tourism is all set to organise a tourism convention of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) nations in August this year, ahead of the upcoming visits of the heads of states of these countries in November.

NISHA VERMA

The Ministry of Tourism has asked Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) to organise B2B meetings at the BRICS nations convention, which would be held in Khajuraho in August 2016, revealed **Rajiv Mehra**, Vice President, IATO, while speaking at the IATO monthly interactive luncheon meeting.



“MOT will host 25 tour operators from each of the BRICS nations for the event, where the 1st day will be devoted to the convention and second day will have B2B meetings. The ministry has asked IATO to fix the B2B meetings and has asked us to submit a few details.”

Rajiv Mehra
Vice President, IATO

“MOT has received a directive from the Prime

Minister to organise a tourism related convention for BRICS nations in Khajuraho on August 31-September 1, 2016. The event will be in line with the visit of the heads of states of BRICS nations to India in November. MOT will host 25 tour operators from each of the BRICS nations for the event, where the 1st day will be devoted to the convention and second day will have B2B meetings. The ministry

has asked IATO to fix the B2B meetings and has asked us to submit a few details,” he revealed.

However, Mehra said that the event is still in the planning stage and there are many things to be finalised. “The proposal for the event has been sent to the Ministry of External Affairs. We have asked MOT to let us know of the participants by August 14, 2016. Once eve-

rything is finalised we will be writing to our members for participating in the B2B meetings,” he revealed.

However, he claimed that owing to the BRICS convention, the annual IATO convention might need to be postponed. “In view of this convention, we might have to do some adjustments in the dates of our annual convention as well,” he said.

Programme List

Ministry of Tourism is set to organise a tourism related convention for BRICS nations in Khajuraho on August 31-September 1, 2016.

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Turbulent times

Airlines are scrambling to bring aviation stocks back up again after several airlines' shares plummeted by a minimum of 2 per cent (in spite of a sizeable profit in Q1) in the aftermath of the fourth straight monthly hike in aviation turbine fuel this year. At a time when 'open skies' is the need of the hour to propagate growth, the 9.2 per cent hike in ATF in Delhi has come as a huge blow not just for the carriers, but for the passengers as well since airfare is most likely to skyrocket. India's domestic market was riding high on a 21.8 per cent increase in air passenger traffic in April making it the 13th consecutive month it led the domestic markets and the 20th month of double digit growth, according to IATA. Additionally, the draft of the Civil Aviation Policy released late last year sought to make millions more fly by capping regional fares but with the policy's release nowhere in sight and recent dampeners in play, will the Indian airline market still boast its strong foothold?

What about the old?

As a tourist destination, India is brimming with history, unique monuments and breathtaking beauty. Yet, we read of state tourism boards announcing the development of newer products with alarming regularity.

In May 2016, Chhattisgarh announced its new adventure tourism facilities at multiple spots (budget unknown), Telangana will develop Adilabad Gandhari Vanam as a tourist spot (budget of `3.5 crore), and Goa will convert its Old Central Jail into a tourist attraction (`25.8 crore). Even Maharashtra has upped its spend on new products like helicopter tourism and seaplane tourism rather than promoting its already-existing and beautiful coastline.

All these cash-rich states are already abundant in tourist attractions that are remarkable in their own way. Some have been promoted well, some aren't. The fact is, unlike countries like Singapore, Dubai or Malaysia, India doesn't need newer tourism products. What it needs is better marketing and improved facilities around the already-existing tourist spots. Old is still gold, but we need to put a shine on it to bring out its lustre.

TRAVTALK brings to you the news and events that made headlines 25 years ago and are even relevant today. From the year 1991, November issue:

New Luxury Train in South East Asia

- ❖ Orient Express Hotels launched a new luxury train in Southeast Asia.
- ❖ The train, called Eastern & Oriental Express was to make one return trip a week between Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok.
- ❖ It was to start service by late 1992 and was to take 41 hours covering a distance of 1943 km.

WEST END IS 100

- ❖ West End – the Taj owned property turned 100 in 1991.
- ❖ By December 1991 it was to get ready with all the new additions and upgradations.
- ❖ It was looking for a five star deluxe status in early 1992.

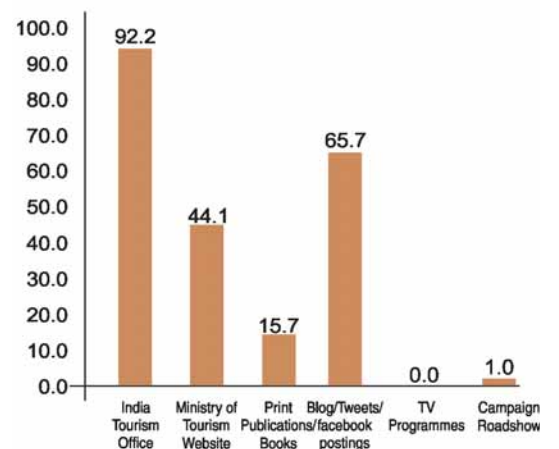
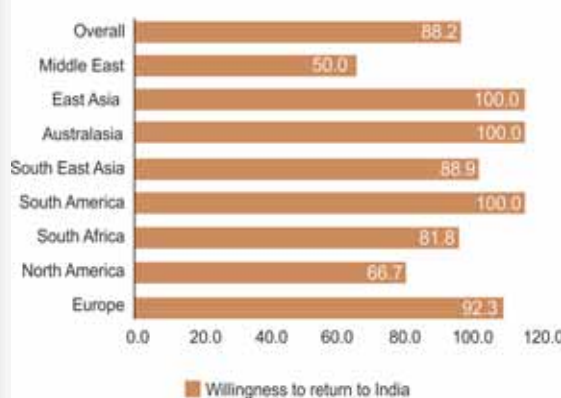
88% tourists are repeat visitors

India is considered a historically resourceful country while it also provides value for money against competition. But how many of your clients come back to explore more of India? Here's a synopsis of a report listing the countries from which travellers are willing to return.

Willingness to return to India

A survey was conducted on approximately 400 inbound tourists at major entry/exit points. On the overall level 88 per cent of the respondents have indicated that they would like to visit India.

The break up by source countries are indicated below:



Source of information

Approx. 83 per cent of the respondents were satisfied with the information made available and 67 per cent are satisfied with the formalities involved. India Tourism Offices and Blogs/Tweets/Social Media postings are most sought-after sources of information.

Source: 'India Inbound Report' by FICCI-MRSS India

MP injects funds into Circuits

Madhya Pradesh Tourism is out to tap the domestic market through its multi-city roadshow across the country. With `98 crores and `75 crores being sanctioned for Wildlife Circuit and Buddhist Circuit respectively, the state is all set to improvise amenities in order to attract more tourists.



SAMAPTI DAS

Madhya Pradesh Tourism organised roadshows in different cities in the country in order to strengthen relations with the travel fraternity and the various private players. The roadshow started on May 27 in Delhi, moving on to Mumbai, Pune, Hyderabad,

Darshan scheme of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. Sundriyal says, "We have been sanctioned `98 crores for Wildlife Circuit, `75 crores for Buddhist and `98 crores in principle for Heritage Circuit." She affirms that the state is trying to add more value to the Wildlife Circuit to attract tourists, while infrastructure development

is priority for areas falling under Buddhist Circuit in Madhya Pradesh.

Buoyed by the success of Jal Mahotsav in February this year, Sundriyal reveals that the event will take place again from December 15, 2016 to January 15, 2017, on a much bigger and better scale.

MP Tourism has made policies and incentives to promote various tourism projects in the state and to facilitate their easy implementation. The main amongst them are its forward looking Wayside Amenity policy, land allotment policy and incentive for heritage projects. Incidentally, bids are out for 3 heritage projects. Talking about

the marketing strategy of the state tourism, Sundriyal says, "We will be doing 360-degree campaigns with consistent communication everywhere."

Madhya Pradesh Tourism has facilitated the national conventions of associations like IATO, ATOAI and ADTOI in various destinations of the state.

Treasure Trove

- Madhya Pradesh has 77,700 sq. kms of forest area cover, nine national parks and 25 wildlife sanctuaries
- In addition to wildlife, the state has three UNESCO World Heritage Sites — Khajuraho, Bhimbetka and Sanchi



Tanvi Sundriyal
Additional Managing Director, Madhya Pradesh
State Tourism Development Corporation

We have been sanctioned `98 crores for Wildlife Circuit, `75 crores for Buddhist and `98 crores in principle for Heritage Circuit

Bengaluru. Tanvi Sundriyal, Additional Managing Director, Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation, says, "Roadshows are a way in which we are bidding partnerships with our private sellers and the buyers in the form of travel and tour operators from various cities. We'll start with Tier-I cities and then move on to the Tier-II cities."

Madhya Pradesh has 77,700 sq. kms of forest area cover, nine national parks and 25 wildlife sanctuaries, the major ones being Bandhavgarh, Pench, Kanha, Panna, Satpura Wildlife Sanctuary, and Chambal Ghadiyal Sanctuary.

In addition to wildlife, the state has three UNESCO World Heritage Sites — Khajuraho, Bhimbetka and Sanchi. Orchha, Gwalior, and Mandu are some of the other beautiful architectural sites.

The state tourism has been sanctioned with various projects like Wildlife Circuit, Heritage Circuit and Buddhist Circuit within the Swadesh

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8% growth in Indian arrivals

India continues to be the top BRIC market for Britain with the latest International Passenger Survey figures showing record visits from India in 2015, up from 390,000 to 422,000.

DEVIKA JEET FROM BRITAIN

Indian visitors spent £433 million in Britain last year along with 9.2 million overnights. India year-on-year robust visitor figures ensure that Britain is on its way to achieve the 2020 target of 500,000 visits. India's promise to grow this market was evident in the ExploreGB workshop organised by Visit-

Britain in Liverpool this year. The Best of Britain was showcased to buyers from across the globe. In its second year, more than 300 international buyers from 40 countries did business with more than 300 travel trade suppliers from across England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The Indian contingent included a large number of senior indus-

try players and post the workshop they explored the southern part of England.

Along with strengthening its agent network, VisitBritain is focused on digital marketing in India and developing its business visits and events from the region.

Christopher Rodrigues, Chairman, VisitBritain, says,

"We are redeveloping our Brit-Agent programme which in the online module we use to communicate with the travel agents and agencies. We recognise the web is used for research across Asia but the agent remains extremely important and we making sure that the agents are briefed and understand how to sell Britain. And of course we need to further work to improve our visas."

Investing more in the overseas network and focusing on proactive engagement, VisitBritain has its eye on India. "India is one of our core markets. We have seen a good growth and it is one of the markets that deliver a good regional spread as well. Regional growth is one of the absolute targets that we have from the Government. It's the BRIC market that we get the

most business from and we saw a growth of 13 per cent in the last nine months of the last year. Though the spend has been a bit flat but the volume is grown more than



Christopher Rodrigues
Chairman
VisitBritain

value," adds **Patricia Yates**, Director, Strategy and Communications, VisitBritain.

With all the basic requirements in place to grow the Indian market, VisitBritain is doing a little restructuring in India to align more with the travel trade. "India is a market with a growing middle class and growing aspirations to travel. We have great connectivity with India through our partnerships with Middle Eastern carriers. So all the basic requirements to grow the markets are there and now we are looking at refocus in India. We are moving our major office to Mumbai to be more aligned with the trade and build products and



Patricia Yates
Director, Strategy and Communications
VisitBritain

knowledge. This will help us to grow our regional products being sold in India. We absolutely recognise the importance of a traditional tour operator and travel agent and their role in delivering business. We are working with the trade to ensure that they have the product knowledge to help the growth," says Yates.

VisitBritain's countryside campaign received a positive welcome with increased numbers to North Britain and Lake District. The tourism board will continue to introduce the Indian agents to more saleable products and work closely with the trade.

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ADTOI's Chhattisgarh office

The Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India launched its Chhattisgarh Chapter on June 5 in Raipur.

TT BUREAU

The entire central leadership of ADTOI and all of their Executive Council members gathered under one roof to launch their latest chapter in Chhattisgarh. **Ritesh Mundhra**, Choice Holidays, is the Chapter Chairman. Mundhra said, "There cannot be a better platform than ADTOI to promote Chhattisgarh



Tourism. Everybody is talking about new destinations within India and looking for new products for the domestic market. Chhattisgarh has the necessary infrastructure in terms of airport, railway

stations, connectivity, and excellent road network to start catering to tourists. But at the same time we need to understand that Chhattisgarh is an ecologically fragile destination and we need to edu-

cate visitors about their impact on the local environment."

Chhattisgarh Tourism Board members, local travel agents, and ADTOI members from other parts of the country like Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, and Jaipur were also present during the event.

Jyoti Kapur, President, ADTOI, said, "ADTOI is spreading its wings in Central India. With the Chhattisgarh Chapter, we are in the heart of India. It has a great potential for interstate tourism. There is nature, waterfalls, tribals, as well as infrastructure. All we need to do is develop it and promote it."

New portal for enquiries

IATO will develop a new, user-friendly interactive website for enquiries and increase its presence on social media.

TT BUREAU

The first luncheon meeting of IATO post elections, held on June 1, 2016 at Pride Plaza Hotel, Aerocity, New Delhi did not see **Pronab Sarkar**, President, IATO, in presence. It was **Rajiv Mehra**, Vice President, IATO, who addressed the gathering and revealed that they've had multiple meetings with the Ministry of Tourism (MOT). Apart from extending the various timelines in application and validity for eTV, they wanted it to be extended to countries like Italy, Saudi Arabia and Maldives, which the MOT has agreed on.

Lally Matthews, Honorary Secretary, IATO, also updated the gathering on the membership drive of the association and said that the new Executive Committee (EC) has already approved 35 new applications. He also revealed that regarding the MOT website enquiries, the IATO committee, which was formed under him, has made a few recommendations. "We have decided to issue a cir-



Lally Matthews
Honorary Secretary
IATO

cular to the members and advise them about the technical details and how to improve their profile to get more enquiries. The existing website is obsolete and a new website has to be developed, which should be more user friendly, interactive, responsive, CMS based, with MIS and compatible to mobile App and other social media. We want the enquiries to go on rotation to all the active members. The present software has some grey areas and we are looking into it."

He also talked about the revised guidelines for the partial Fam tour system

that IATO members organise with assistance from MOT for international tour operators with whom they develop contacts during global tourism exhibition, roadshows, and sales call visits. "MOT had put on hold the proposals for such Fam tours since mid April and on the request of Pronab Sarkar, they are now continuing the partial hospitality assistance policy. However, an upper ceiling would be put, under which each agent can get maximum 15 air tickets. Also the members need to apply for the same with MOT in Delhi only."

He further added, "The hospitality scheme of MOT, under which foreign delegates are taken for Fam tours in India, organised by IATO members, the existing rates of hotels, transport and guides was updated by the ministry two years back. Since then there is a huge escalation in room rates, as well as guide and transport fee. We have sent a proposal to the MOT to revise these rates."

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GPS is the first travel showcase to have its own comprehensive mobile application.

A boom in the travel and tourism scenario in Tier II and III cities is a fantastic opportunity for travel agents and tour operators to tap the emerging market in these cities. The trade in these cities has exponentially shot up in the last few years exposing potential worth tapping.

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Atmosphere opens 3rd hotel in Maldives

The hotel group has been promoting its third and flagship property located in Maldives in smaller cities in India along with its partner Krisia Holidays.



TT BUREAU

Atmosphere Hotels & Resorts is preparing for the opening of its third and flagship property in Maldives called Ozen at Maadhoo on July 15, 2016. With 90 luxurious standalone villas, this property will be a high-end premium all-inclusive luxury resort. In Mumbai to promote this property, **Dinesh Bhaskar**,

smaller cities. We are getting our bookings from all these cities and not even in the base category but they are asking for the top-end rooms," he said adding that bookings for Ozen have already started coming in. ↓



Dinesh Bhaskar
Group Director – Sales & Marketing,
Atmosphere Hotels & Resorts Maldives

Group Director – Sales & Marketing, Atmosphere Hotels & Resorts Maldives, said, "We have the right partner in place in Krisia Holidays who has been with us from the beginning. We want to reach out to the trade in Tier-II and III cities as that is where the demand is coming from."



Suraj Dalwani
MD
Krisia Holidays

Bhaskar and his team have been meeting with the travel trade for promoting the new hotel. He will return to India (Mumbai) in September-October this year with its own roadshow. "We are being very selective and careful when reaching out to the trade. We are not looking at mass travel agents. We also have an introductory offer for trade for the new hotel," Bhaskar added.

Suraj Dalwani, MD, Krisia Holidays, says, "We have already been marketing the new property; we have a team in Delhi, Bengaluru, Coimbatore, Kolkata, etc who meet the agents regularly. We are also tapping

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

❖ IATA elects De Juniac as DG & CEO

Alexandre de Juniac, Chairman and CEO of Air France-KLM, will succeed **Tony Tyler** as IATA's Director General and CEO effective from September 1, 2016. De Juniac will be the seventh person to lead IATA as its Director General. De Juniac will join IATA from Air France-KLM where has served as Chairman and CEO since 2013. Prior to that, he was the Chairman and CEO of Air France (2011-2013).



Alexandre de Juniac
Director General & CEO
IATA

❖ Ryanair reduces baggage fees

European airline Ryanair is reducing its checked baggage fees — just in time for the busy summer travel season. The low-cost carrier has announced it is cutting some fees by as much as 50 per cent. Checking a bag that weighs less than 34 pounds for a domestic flight shorter than two hours will now cost €15 (\$17), down from €30 (\$33). A heavier bag on the same flight length will cost 38% less at €25 (\$28). Travellers checking a lighter bag on flights under three hours will pay €25 (roughly \$28) — a 17 per cent price reduction.

❖ Nepal conducts roadshow in US

In a bid to recover from the loss of revenue caused by plummeting tourist numbers from the West, the Nepal Tourism Board along with the Ministry of Tourism Nepal is organising a five-city roadshow in the US for travel professionals to promote the destination. It will be attended by senior delegates from Nepal led by **Deepak Raj Joshi**, CEO, Nepal Tourism Board, and **Prem K. Rai**, Secretary of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Nepal. The schedule will include Denver (June 20), Phoenix (June 21), Long Beach/Los Angeles (June 23), San Francisco (June 24) and Seattle (June 27).



Lazy travel agents are generous.
They give away their customers to OTA.

By opting to work with Affiliate Programme Owners (let's call them OTAs), the travel agents are actually hitting a road block.

While the travel agent is doing the hard work, the OTAs are controlling the destiny.

By working on fixed commissions, travel agents lose the ability to earn as per market dynamics. Worst, they expose their customers to OTAs. Moving forward, what would stop the big boys to gobble up the pie?

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FAITH-led convention in Jan 2017

■ Sarab Jit Singh, Vice Chairman, FAITH, has revealed that they will be organising an 'Incredible India Calling' convention along with all its member associations in January 2017.

Singh revealed, "We've decided that in the second week of January, FAITH, with support of its 10 member associations, is planning to have an industry convention called Incredible India Calling. Subhash Goyal will be the Chairman for this convention on behalf of FAITH. We are trying to invite the Prime Minister for the inauguration or the valedictory function, whichever can be worked out."

Spilling the beans about the issues being discussed at the convention, he said, "There are

so many issues and things which one association is taking up and the same is being done by a few others as well. What we want to do is that discuss all the common issues, goals and needs on one common platform so that we can work in tandem. This way when we talk to the government, we are not confusing the officials, and when they take a decision, it is for the benefit of the industry at large."

The associations are also meeting to discuss how to fight against unethical business practices prevailing in the industry. Singh revealed that Jyoti Kapur, President, ADTOI, has put forth the concern that the business of tour operators and travel agents



Sarab Jit Singh
Vice Chairman, FAITH

is being hit by some OTAs, which are indulging in unethical business practices by underselling hotels and other tourism products. "There is a need for the government to step in and put a stop on it. We are meeting to discuss how to take this forward."

Smooth sailing in India

With the government trying to add wind to the sails of cruiseliners eager to tap the India market, private players detail what's in store for cruise enthusiasts in the country.

TT BUREAU



Nalini Gupta
Head India Operations
Costa Cruises

“ Our Mediterranean route has become our biggest revenue generator. While the child-go-free policy encourages family travel, our short sailings attract the corporate MICE segment. Our sailings from Singapore are also very popular. Our short-duration sailings with interesting itineraries, excellent airline connectivity to Singapore and the attraction of Singapore per se are the contributing factors. Going forward, Costa Neo Classica will be sailing from Mumbai to Maldives, starting December 2016, to gain popularity in India. Besides seeing a significant increase in FITs, GITs and MICE, we have started seeing queries for charters in the Mediterranean region.”



Richa Goyal Sikri
Director - Group Business
Development, Stic Travels

“ Lately, people have become more eager to experience luxury on board and take premium cruise liners. Especially the younger generation, with ample disposable income, has shown increasing interest in cruise holidays and exploring exotic locations.”

In terms of destination, Indians are majorly opting for Alaska, European and Caribbean sailings but are also gradually showing interest in South America, Antarctica, Australia and New Zealand where we see the numbers increasing.”

“ Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong have been the best selling destinations this season in terms of groups. For FITs we have also seen demand for Alaska and the Bahamas. In Tamil Nadu, people were not really aware of the cruises. We have promoted the same along the years and now we have seen the demand increasing. There is a huge potential for cruise tourism in Tamil Nadu. In fact, there is a cruise terminal being constructed in Chennai, which is funded by MOT, and it could really boost the market in the region as well as in India.”



Sriharan Balan
Director-Administrations,
Madura Travel Service

The high-flying team



Etihad Airways, official airline partner and principal sponsor of defending champions Mumbai Indians at this year's IPL T20 cricket tournament, invited its partners from the travel trade in Mumbai for a cocktail reception to meet the Mumbai Indians team.

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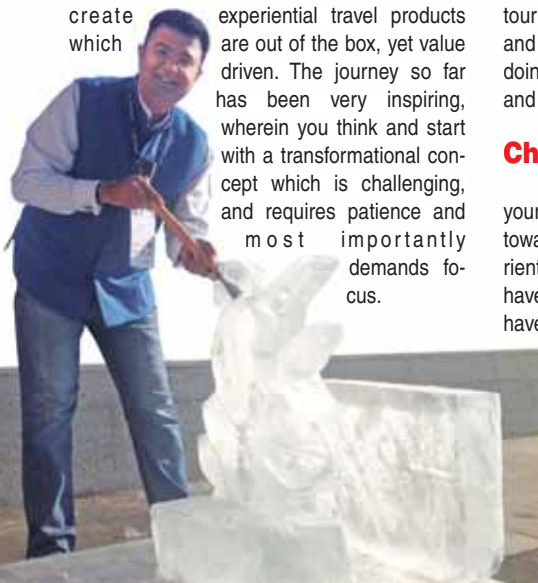
Committed to offer bespoke and meaningful international journeys to discerning clients, **Amit Kalsi**, Founder and CEO, Experiential Travel Journeys, has carved a niche in the luxury travel segment with inspiring and authentic holidays. Kalsi narrates his journey to TRAVTALK.

Mantra

I believe better travel is a result of digging deeper and connecting the right dots. As a private travel designer, I am a connector, consultant, editor and arranger of the trip which is at a deeper, richer, more authentic and immersive level.

Journey so far

The last two years have changed the way I approach travel products and I have become a maverick about attention to detail, trying to create experiential travel products which are out of the box, yet value driven. The journey so far has been very inspiring, wherein you think and start with a transformational concept which is challenging, and requires patience and most importantly demands focus.



Amit Kalsi, Founder and CEO, Experiential Travel Journeys

Driving factor

The concept of experiential travel has luxury embedded in the experience and not in the appearance. Luxury is in encounters, it is in the stories, and never reaches a point of stagnation. One is always hungry for more and so are your clients, who always challenge your limits to keep innovating and looking for fresh and new ideas. I design experiences for individuals and not masses. These individuals are sophisticated discerning travellers, not tourists. They offer smiles, are open-minded and have deep pockets. I am still learning and doing things not done or explored in the past and that's what keeps me going.

Challenges

The challenge has been to remain true to your business concept and remain committed towards promoting, offering and selling experiential travel. It becomes a struggle when you have to filter your business queries, since we have many aspirational luxury outbound travellers in India, but only few are discerning, sophisticated and have matured to the next level of seeking more engaging form of travel, willing to experiment and get out of their comfort zones.

So communicating with the right audience and connecting with the right client, who needs, appreciate, and most importantly pays for your expert serv-



is, is the key. But irrespective of the level of difficulty involved in filtering and finding such clients, I am glad that I have been able to find and engage and service clients who belong to this breed of sophisticated travellers.

Learning

I wish to acknowledge the learning I have had while working at Abercrombie and Kent India, which provided the base and foundation on which I could conceptualise the idea of Experiential Travel Journeys. My appreciation will be incomplete without mentioning about the guidance, supervision and trust entrusted in me by Mr. Vikram Madhok, Managing Di-

rector, Abercrombie & Kent India, during my tenure under his leadership at A&K. He remains to me an inspiration and mentor for my continuing endeavors in this segment of Experiential Travel.

Industry

This segment of business is growing, as it is the outbound segment from India and the segment within, which is maturing at a faster rate to become more discerning and sophisticated. This segment is not about number of high net worth individuals (HNIs) or ultra high net worth individuals (UHNIs) in India. It's now about preferences, perspective of travellers and changing trends. Now travellers want to discover the world not just by seeing it, but doing activities and experiencing a more holistic holiday. The travellers in this segment understand that such immersive experiences are not cheap and are willing to splurge on these lifetime enrichments.





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Brazil calling

H.E. Tovar da Silva Nunes, Ambassador of Brazil, is extremely positive about tourism ties between Brazil and India, and feels tourism creates the perfect bridge for enhanced cooperation.

INDER RAJ AHLUWALIA

QHow important is tourism for Brazil?

Tourism is extremely important. It's an instrument for strengthening contacts with other countries, benefiting from their experience and values, as well as establishing connections to disseminate our culture, attract investments, and promote our exports abroad. It is also a strategic sector for the Brazilian economy, exhibiting an impressive growth rate of 12.6 per cent - double the world's average. Brazil's tourism industry is already the seventh largest in the world. Including the direct and indirect activities related to the sector, the amount of financial resources mobilised by tourism activities reaches 9.6 per cent of Brazilian GDP. And the figure of 5 million visitors to the country can be further increased.

QIs Brazil keen on getting Indian tourists and conventions?

Not only Indian tourists and conventions, but also businessmen, scientists, students and other segments of Indian society are welcome in Brazil. India is relatively well known in



H.E. Tovar da Silva Nunes
Ambassador
Brazil

Brazil, and the same happens with Brazil in India. By improving our mutual knowledge, we are progressing towards deeper cooperation in several fields. Tourism constitutes a strategic tool to achieve this goal.

QWould Brazilians be keen to visit India as tourists?

Brazilians would certainly be keen to visit India. There is great potential for both countries in the tourism field. For turning this potential into reality, however, we need to develop a clear and well-articulated set of government policies and campaigns aimed at projecting India as a tourist destination in Brazil, and Brazil as a tourist destination in India.

QDo you feel tourism would boost other businesses and lead to further bilateral ties between Brazil and India?

In economics we have a term called "positive externalities". It refers to the indirect impact of a specific policy or measure in other sectors or activities, not necessarily directly related to the original target. The development of Indo-Brazil tourism will create a huge set of "positive externalities" in fields like investments, commerce, science, sports, and politics.

Adventures of Andaman

Mountain Edge Tours and Holidays is introducing new adventure activities in Andaman & Nicobar Islands in order to attract more tourists and offer a variety of experiences.

TT BUREAU

New activities like mini submarines, under water coral walks, under water scooter rides, cruises for Havelock Island, new yachts and boat rides are being launched for the leisure travellers coming to Andaman and Nicobar Islands informs **Prakash Kumar Raj**, Director, Mountain Edge Tours and Holidays.

The company witnessed a 35 per cent growth in 2015 over 2014. "We took nearly 10,000 travellers to Andaman in 2015 corresponding to a 35 per cent growth and hope to increase the numbers to approximately 20,000 travellers in the coming year. We are targeting at least a 25 per cent growth in 2016," says Raj.

The destination management company has the largest on ground staff in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and functions with trained travel and tourism graduates, which sets them apart from



Prakash Kumar Raj
Director
Mountain Edge Tours and Holidays

We took nearly 10,000 travellers to Andaman in 2015 - a 35% growth - and hope to increase the numbers to approx. 20,000 in the coming year

other DMCs offering similar services explains Raj.

"We work with many hotel chains like Sarovar Group, Fortune Hotels and pass on the hotel discount benefits to

our travel trade partners from time to time," adds Raj. For the coming season, the company is offering 50 per cent discount deals on hotels, and 25 per cent discounts on special packages which the travel agents can avail from the company. The company does not offer commissions to the agents but offers discounted special packages to them.

In order to promote the offerings of the company, Mountain Edge Tours and Holidays will be participating in several international trade shows to showcase their products. "We are looking forward to be present at WTM London and ITB Berlin this year and will also conduct roadshows in metros like Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata," says Raj.

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OTAs v/s agents: Room for both

Travel agents have often been seen jostling for space ever since the industry has spawned their online counterparts. Can the online travel agents (OTAs) and traditional travel agents (TAs) coexist in the India market?

HAZEL JAIN

ASSOCIATION SPEAK



Guldeep Singh Sahni
President, OTOAI

“ The OTA and the travel agent are both an integral part of the industry today. Both are here to stay and fulfill an important role; the OTAs focus on volume while the TA wins over with services. With growing outbound numbers, there will be growth for both. Of course, the fear of taking the chunk away remains with the travel agents, but new technology will have to be adopted. With the combination of personalised service and technology, the TA will exist and the OTA will continue to provide offline services to boost sales. ”

“ OTAs are gaining momentum because of their reach and convenience. Certain OTAs are selling tickets cheaper as they are funded by private equity funds. Currently, the travel agent is facing loss of market share and is finding it very difficult, but if it provides more value in terms of tour packages or special incentive tours in addition to airline tickets, it will sustain itself and coexist with OTAs in the market. ”



Pradip Lulla
National General Secretary
TAFI

“ The conflict is due to discounts and offers made by online companies from their marketing budgets to lure clients as they get VC funding. The motive is to show higher sales irrespective of the profits. When travellers book with the OTAs they select the cheapest option, not understanding the terms and conditions whereas with a travel agent the same is explained to them. The OTAs and the travel agent shall always coexist because some travellers look for discounts and cheap deals and others the human interaction, advice and quality of service. ”



Jay Bhatia
Hon. National
Treasurer & Chairman –
Tourism Council
TAAI



Biji Eapen
National President
IAAI

“ There is a general feeling that OTAs have taken away a big chunk of business from the traditional travel agents. But, is everything really hunky dory with the OTA style of bookings? While these OTAs promise the ‘lowest possible rates’, is the Indian traveller really getting the best deal? What happens when a flight gets cancelled or the traveller comes down with the flu right before a trip? Is booking travel through an OTA always the best option for a traveller or his wallet? Besides, the prospect of entering a credit card number into an online booking site is still foreign to a majority of Indian travellers. As such, in India, it is very safe to say that OTAs have not put much of a dent into the more traditional model of offline TAs. ”

TRADE SPEAK

“ The travel agents are thriving and so are the OTAs. To survive, travel agents and OTAs need to create their own identity by introducing niche products and services. By trying to put their hands in many activities, they would be spreading themselves thin. I would rather suggest folks to own a large share of a small pie rather than the other way round. ”



Prakash Bang
Managing Director
roomsXML Solutions

“ Earlier, travel agents had to spend a huge amount to market their packages online but with the presence of OTAs these TAs get good visibility and can advertise packages to travellers worldwide. Similarly, OTAs through their partnership with local TAs get an opportunity to use this channel to run promos in places where the agent has a strong foothold. ”



Neelu Singh
CEO & Director
Ezeego1

“ I think both are required and both have enough space to thrive. There is no need to worry for either of the players and take knee-jerk reaction as many offline agents are thinking of shutting shop or few OTAs are burning cash by offering out-of-pocket discounts to gain market share. Both can coexist. Since OTAs are the big brother with high amount of cash at their disposal they should win the confidence of the offline agents who are in large numbers (over 2,00,000) by giving them opportunity to work with them in promoting their services. ”



Madhav Oza
Director
Blue Star Air Travel Services



Manoj Samuel
Director, (IT & HR)
Riya Group

“ A huge percentage of our turnover comes from the B2B online space. There is no issue between OTAs and the travel agent or the tour operator. Each has its own strength. While the OTAs rule the roost when it comes to domestic airline ticketing, the operators and agents win hands down when we talk about international ticketing and tour packages. Although brand loyalty has come to mean very little these days with travellers and B2B clients buying from anyone who is selling cheaper, there are some areas where the OTA and agent/operator don't overlap. ”

“ Indian brick-and-mortar travel agents are witnessing challenging times from not just OTAs but suppliers themselves. Agents and tour operators without online presence for their niche products will find it extremely difficult to weather the storm in next couple of years. While TAs no doubt offer professional and personalised services, the scope for earning is getting restricted day by day. It is advisable that there is parity of fares and prices alongside all verticals within our industry. ”



Hector Dsouza
President, Lorient Travels

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TBO among world's 'greatest brands'



Ankush Nijhawan and Gaurav Bhatnagar of TBO Group, were honoured with 'The World's Greatest Brands & Leaders 2015-16' award during the World Today Business Conclave 2015-16 held at the Roma Ballroom of Ritz Carlton Hotel, Abu Dhabi on May 29, 2016. The event focused on the entire region of IUA, i.e. India, the UAE and Eastern & Western Africa, targeting mutual business associations across continents. About 80 Brands and Leader award winners were felicitated in the presence of 200 audience from India, the UAE and Africa.

App that can be a marketplace

The mobile application developed specially for the Global Panorama Showcase (GPS) has the potential to become a marketplace in itself, claims its Nagpur-based organiser Jagsons Travels.



The Global Panorama Showcase (GPS), India's first travel show that focuses on the potential of Central India, has launched a mobile App that has already gone live and has been showing an impressive number of downloads. The App will reflect all information pertaining to the event as well as the contact details of

exhibitors and registered participants. This was done just in time for the upcoming four-city trade roadshow.

Harmandeep Singh Anand, Managing Director, Jagsons Travels, says, "We are probably the first company in India to launch an exclusive B2B application for a travel show. It is live now and we are working towards mak-

ing it a marketplace for GPS participants and will be able to showcase their products. They will also get access to the database in the cities they register for. It is available on iOS, Android, Blackberry, and Windows platforms." Jagsons is looking at getting at least 50 exhibitors in each city.

The show has six slots for presentations in each city



Harmandeep Singh Anand
Managing Director
Jagsons Travels

which are still available. The GPS App will also allow exhibitors to have banner ads there. "The App also allows them to upload their products that can be accessed by buyers in all cities in the database. Tier-II and Tier-III destinations require a lot of attention and exposure to the destinations and the products they have," Anand adds.

EntReps entered a sales and marketing partnership with Jagsons Travels in 2014 to promote GPS in India and internationally. **Madhu Saliankar**, Director, EntReps Solutions, says, "We are inviting and hosting only relevant buyers from around those cities. For instance, for the Ahmedabad show we are only hosting buyers from Gujarat and Rajasthan to keep it relevant.



Madhu Saliankar
Director
EntReps Solutions

Our focus is on Tier-II markets and on the domestic market rather than international. So we are very keen to get products like houseboats of Kashmir, Adlabs Imagica, wildlife parks like Corbett, Kanha and Pench, etc. The trend now is people taking shorter holidays within India and more often. Domestic tourism has indeed picked up." Participants for the four-city roadshow need to go on the GPS website and register themselves for those cities they want to attend. Jagsons is also arranging for airport transfers. "We want to highlight the product owners and DMCS as people need to build contacts with suppliers at the end of the day. We are encouraging tourism boards and representation companies to bring their suppliers with them."

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Alwar on hospitality map

MGB Group of Hotels offers state-of-the-art stays in its various properties in the city of Alwar that would suit every kind of guests.

TT BUREAU

MGB Group of Hotels is the first hospitality brand in Alwar, Rajasthan, claims **Manish Bhatia**, Managing Director, MGB Hotels. "We have three properties in Alwar, namely MGB Hotels, Sparrow Inn and Ankur Hotel with a total inventory of 78 rooms," he says. With Alwar attracting a number of tourists from around the country, the hotel gets a variety of

clients. Bhatia says, "We get business from both corporate and leisure clients. However, our main target is leisure."

He further says that travel agents form a major part of their sales. "We are doing sales through travel agents as well as digital marketing. We also go to all the major trade fairs in the country. Apart from that we visit the offices of travel agents as well as OTAs to make them

aware about the product we have on offer." In terms of expansion, he adds, "We will be expanding and are already planning for the same."

Navigator

All the properties under MGB Group of Hotels are located in the heart of Alwar City at just 150 kms from both Jaipur and Delhi, 200 kms (approx.)



Manish Bhatia
Managing Director
MGB Hotels

However, it is only on paper as of now."

1st Travel Wedding Show begins July 9

Over 900 face-to-face appointments between buyers and exhibitors are expected to take place during a span of two days and will bring the biggest wedding product providers and consumers under one roof.

TT BUREAU

The wedding market in India is reportedly a multi-billion industry with thousands of weddings taking

place in the country throughout the year. The industry has flourished over a period of time and is probably the only one that thrives even in the face of recession. After all, it's not called a 'big fat Indian wedding' for nothing.

In a bid to tap the booming market, the maiden edition of the Travel Wedding Show will be held from July 9-10, 2016, in Gurugram. The closed-door event is the brainchild of the Pacific Leisure Group (PLG) and DDP Group and will bring together a selective list of buyers and exhibitors under one roof.



Sarika Bhambani Rawal
General Manager
Travel Wedding Show

Commenting on the move, Executive Chairman and Founder of PLG, **Alwin Zecha** said, "I'm extremely proud of having the honour and privilege to host the Travel Wedding Show 2016. Our aim has always been to provide our clients with a complete range of services for all their business requirements with assistance from our experienced and dedicated staff. With this event, we intend on bringing the same level of expertise to the Indian market and thoroughly delighting our clients."

Around 30 buyers and 30 exhibitors will be a part of the inaugural show, reveals **Sarika Bhambani Rawal**, General Manager, Travel Wedding Show. "We expect over 900 face-to-face appointments and 30 pre-arranged table-top meetings over a span of two days," she says.

The first day will cater exclusively to wedding planners, while the second day will target specialised travel agents with experience of global weddings.

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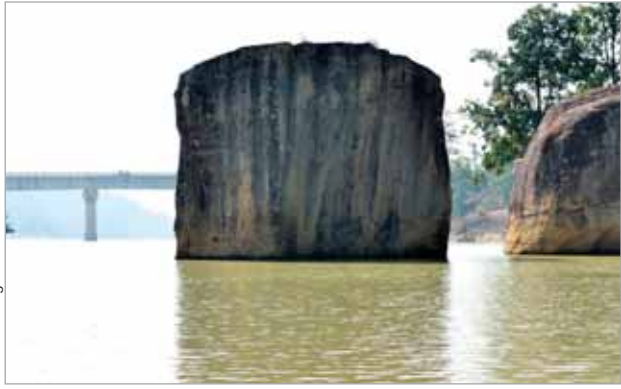
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Hasdeo Bango Dam



Chitrakote Falls

Uncovering Chhattisgarh's Monsoon Milieu

Winding ghats, lush greenery all around, mesmerising waterfalls cascading down into a mist and overflowing rivers - these are but a few visual treats that Chhattisgarh offers during the monsoons. With an aim to present the best curated monsoon destinations, Chhattisgarh Tourism is all set to position the state as an alluring monsoon destination in the country.

WATERFALLS & DAMS

Chitrakote: This happens to be India's best kept secret. Also referred to as the Niagara Falls of India, Chitrakote has the distinction

Mendri Ghoomar:

This is a small but pretty waterfall located at about 24 kms from Chitrakote. The view of the deep valley below and virgin forest beyond is spectacular. One can also

and makes it the right setting for a spectacular waterfall. The falls are also close to the Shiva temple where the Mahashivaratri fair originated in 1936 and continues till date.

Gangrel Dam:

Also known as Ravishankar Dam, it is a popular tourist spot in the Dhamtari



Hasdeo Bango Dam



Mainpat landscape



Jatmai

of being the broadest waterfall in India. It is fed by the Indravati River and lends a spectacular view of the waterfall during the monsoon when the river flows in its full fury and touches both the banks.

visit *haat* (market) at Mardum village between Barsur and Chitrakote.

Jatmai and Ghatrani:

The twin waterfalls of Chhattisgarh are surrounded by lush greenery which makes them the perfect location near Raipur to have a family picnic on the weekend, offering the family a different scene from the usual. At Jatmai, there is a temple of Goddess Jatmai adjacent to the waterfall. Ghatrani waterfall is 25 kms from Jatmai and is slightly bigger.

Tirathgarh: This 300-ft high waterfall is situated in the Kanger Valley National Park. The fall here splits into multiple stunning vistas.

There is a small temple on a large rock opposite the falls and around the falls are the ruins of a 1,000-year-old Hindu civilisation.

Amritdhara: The area is covered by dense forests, mountains and rivers

district. Built across the Mahanadi River, the reservoir offers a lot of water sports, virgin islands and much more. Gangrel Dam during monsoon is a must-visit and offers picturesque view of enriched flora and fauna.

Hasdeo Bango Dam:

Hasdeo Bango Dam is constructed across the Hasdeo river. It is located 70 kms from Korba, Korba district and has a catchment area of 6,730 kms. This dam and its surroundings present the most spectacular views during monsoons.

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

Amarkantak:

Mainly a pilgrimage destination, it is also the origin of the Narmada river and is considered sacred by devotees. The area is well-known for a huge variety of medicinal plants.

Kabir Chabutra:

This is one of the sacred places where Saint Kabir achieved salvation. Pilgrims visiting Kabir Chabutra can also view the saint's footwear which has been carefully preserved in a small temple near the chabutra.

Mainpat: A popular honeymoon destination, the place provides good options for biking, camping and caravan tourism. Mainpat is set on a plateau with the area surrounded by jungles. A Tibetan settlement is situated closeby that offers an excellent opportunity for interaction with the community.

southern Nighghat. Forests dominate the Upper Ghat with reserves spanning Sanna, Bagicha and Narayanpur. Nighghat is flat in general but also has many big mountains. Two more ghats are situated in Jashpur Raigarh road.

Jashpur: Jashpur consists of the northern hilly Upper Ghat and the

Rajmergarh:

The highland makes for a fascinating tourist spot and is admired by visitors for its forest and fauna, and frequent sightings of bears.



Ghatrani



Hasdeo Bango Dam

Melting pot of cultures

Uzbekistan is located in the core of Great Silk Road, at the crossroads of people migration and commercial routes. The amalgamation of original cultures between the settled and nomadic people makes it a cultural potpourri.



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Truly Tashkent

The political, business, scientific and cultural centre of Uzbekistan, Tashkent is an ancient city that dates back to more than 2000 years ago. Numerous historical monuments including Kukekdosh and Barak-Khana Madrassas, erected in the 16th century, have been preserved to this day while other iconic constructions like the Amir Temur Monument, Mustaqillik (Independence) Square and The Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre among several others, are visited by tourists



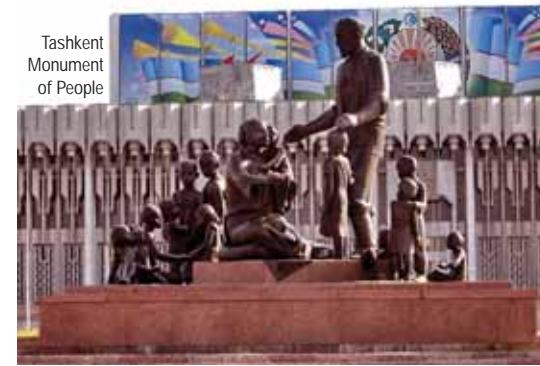
Ark Fortress, Bukhara

from the world over. Tashkent is also home to 20 museums including the Uzbek Museum of Fine Arts, one of the largest in Central Asia.

Serene Samarkand

Samarkand has a 2500 year-old history and its convenient geographical location made this city the important crossroads on the Great Silk Road. The Registan Square, Shakh-Zinda Mausoleum, the Gur-Emir Mausoleum, the Juma Mosque etc. are widely-visited places in the city. The history of Samarkand is also closely connected to famous scien-

tists, poets and philosophers. Many tourists also visit Samarkand to pay homage to



Tashkent Monument of People

the relics and sacred places of the Islamic world. One can visit the grave of Saint Kusam ibn-Abbas, a place that was regarded equal to a Hajj to Mecca during the middle ages.

Beautiful Bukhara

Bukhara is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a museum-city: more than 140 architectural monuments of world significance constructed in different centuries have been preserved in Bukhara up to date. Several former madrassas are located in central Bukhara including Madrassa Chor-Minor

Recognition for social work



Lalita Nijhawan, Director, Nijhawan Group, was honoured as a Top Women Achiever 2016 for her exemplary service in providing education for under privileged women and children. Her tryst with social work started in 1992 and has taken her to remote corners of the country in hope of providing education and stability. Earlier this year, 100 women achievers were selected by the Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with Facebook through a nationwide contest and public nominations after which they were felicitated by the President on occasion of the first anniversary of 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' scheme.

Responsible Tourism @WTM London

Responsible Travel has announced the select 75 organisations long-listed for the 2016 World Responsible Tourism at WTM London sponsored by the Belize Tourism Board.

Organisations in the running for the most rigorously judged awards for responsible tourism globally cover a diverse range of issues from campaigning and innovation to poverty reduction and the inclusion of marginalised people, from hotels with exemplary employment initiatives to wildlife and habitat conservation.

Representing a huge diversity of work in 30

countries worldwide, the long list includes a hotel in Dubai rescuing, rehabilitating and re-releasing turtles and educating guests and local children about conservation; an association of hotels and restaurants in Kerala working together to ensure food isn't wasted and that no-one in their community goes hungry; a tour operator in India making heritage sites, street food markets and festivals accessible to all through sensory tours and tailored assistance; a campaign to stop child abuse in tourism in Cambodia; and a hotel offering employment, training and empowerment to refugees in Austria.

The Registan Square, Samarkand



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EVENTS, MEETINGS, INCENTIVES, CONFERENCING, EXHIBITIONS,

PATA takes niche products to USA

PATA India Chapter held its series of India Tourism 'Travel Trade Roadshows' in USA and Canada from May 24 to June 1, 2016. In partnership with the Ministry of Tourism, the PATA Roadshow was held in San Francisco, Orange County, Los Angeles, Vancouver and Seattle. We bring you glimpses of senior industry leaders offering bespoke experiences of Incredible India.



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SpiceJet marks 11th anniversary

SpiceJet held a Bollywood-themed evening of glitz and glamour at The Leela Ambience, Gurugram, to celebrate 11 years of flying in India. The celebrations were graced by the presence of Civil Aviation Minister **Ashok Gajapati Raju** who lauded SpiceJet on its impactful and strong comeback. Chairman and Managing Director of SpiceJet, **Ajay Singh**, warmly welcomed guests and expressed immense gratitude for those who showed solidarity during the airline's ups and downs.



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Honeymoon at Jumeirah Maldives

One can never go wrong with Maldives when suggesting a honeymoon trip or a holiday for couples and what better place to stay at than Jumeirah.



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Jumeriah Maldives has all the right elements for couples be it the spa, dining, activities or accommodation. Jumeirah Maldives specialises in creating unforgettable moments for its in-house guests. They can indulge in the absolute luxury this property has to offer which is fast becoming the first choice

which means that if you find a lower rate elsewhere online, for the same stay, date and room type then the group will match that price and offer an additional 15 per cent saving, she claims.



Alefiya Singh
Director
Iris Reps

Being the perfect honeymoon destination, couples can rest, rejuvenate and reinvigorate at Jumeirah's Maldives resorts and enjoy luxury holidays at the island hideaways

for celebrities like Bipasha Basu and her beau who made Maldives their short honeymoon getaway.

Alefiya Singh, Director, Iris Reps, which represents Jumeriah Maldives in India, says, "Arguably the world's most relaxing holiday destination, the Maldives offers azure blue waters, stunning sea life and pristine white beaches. Being the perfect honeymoon destination, couples can rest, rejuvenate and reinvigorate at Jumeirah's Maldives resorts and enjoy luxury holidays at the island hideaways." Travellers can enjoy the convenience of Jumeirah Vitavelli, only 30 minutes from Male, or try the seclusion and solitude of Jumeirah Dhevanafushi. Jumeirah.com provides a 'Best Price Guarantee',

Korea promotes new province in Mumbai



Gyeonggi Tourism Organisation (GTO) along with its MICE Bureau conducted a presentation on tourism and MICE opportunities in the Gyeonggi province of Korea for the travel trade in Mumbai supported by JassNow.

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JUNE 2016

ITE & MICE	Hong Kong	Jun 16-19
Connections Luxury Thailand	Phuket	Jun 19-22
UNWTO Conference on Branding in Tourism	Kiev	Jun 20-21
CITE	Cebu	Jun 30-Jul 2

JULY 2016

Travel and Tourism Fair (TTF)	Kolkata	July 8 -10
Travel Wedding Show	Gurgaon	July 9-10
India Travel Awards East	Kolkata	July 15
Global Panorama Showcase (GPS)	Ahmedabad	July 15-16
Travel and Tourism Fair (TTF)	Hyderabad	July 15-17
GBTA Convention	Denver	July 16-20
Global Panorama Showcase (GPS)	Chandigarh	July 21-22
Tourism Investors Meet	New Delhi	July 28-29
Global Panorama Showcase (GPS)	Kolkata	July 28-29
PATA – WWF Bagh Mittra Awards	New Delhi	July 29
India International Travel Mart	Chennai	July 29-31

AUGUST 2016

CAPA Australia Pacific Summit	Brisbane	Aug 3-5
India Hospitality Awards West & South	Pune	Aug 4
Global Panorama Showcase (GPS)	Coimbatore	Aug 4-5
Hospitality Expo	New Delhi	Aug 4-6
India Travel Awards West	Pune	Aug 5
India International Travel Mart	Bengaluru	Aug 5-7
Tourism Australia-India Travel Mission	Chennai	Aug 18-21
SATTE	Mumbai	Aug 19-20
Travel Technology Show	Gurgaon	Aug 20-21
La Cita USA	Miami	Aug 30-Sept 1

SEPTEMBER 2016

TTF	Ahmedabad	Sept 2-4
Philippines Travel Mart	Pasay	Sept 2-4
International India Medical Tourism Congress	Hyderabad	Sept 3-4
PATA Travel Mart	Greater Jakarta	Sept 7-9
TTF	Surat	Sept 9-11
TTF	Mumbai	Sept 16-18
Tourism Investment Summit	New Delhi	Sept 21-23
JATA Tourism Expo	Tokyo	Sept 22-25
IITM	Mumbai	Sept 23-25
TTF	Pune	Sept 23-25
Kerala Travel Mart	Kochi	Sept 27-30

For more information, contact us at: talk@ddpl.com

Eyeing a piece of domestic pie

Four Points by Sheraton Agra has eyes set on the domestic market, besides MICE and wedding sectors, claims General Manager, **Paul Gomes**.



TT BUREAU

Buoyed about the new express highway connecting Agra with Lucknow, Gomes expects some extra business from that city. There would be a lot of movement in terms of domestic market in Agra, he says.

"In a decade or so, the business in Agra has grown. There's a lot of competition now as good hotel brands have come up in the city. There are a lot of opportunities in terms of hotel facilities at a good value of price which will definitely attract



Paul Gomes
General Manager
Four Points by Sheraton Agra

travellers from the domestic market," he adds.

Gomes informs that he is looking at about 40 per cent growth from the domestic mar-



Vivek Mahajan
Resident Manager
Four Points by Sheraton Agra

ket and 20 per cent from international. The USP of the hotel is that half of the inventories of the hotel overlooks the Taj Mahal like the gym, the spa and most of the rooms. Even the

recently opened roof-top restaurant at the hotel also gives a clear view of the iconic World Heritage Site.

Revealing more about the hotel, **Vivek Mahajan**, Resident Manager, Four Points by Sheraton Agra, says that the 165-key property is focusing on MICE and destination weddings, international, domestic as well as theme weddings. "During the months of October to March it is the agents' season," he says, adding, "The B2B partners are always helpful and we are focusing on all partners like B2B and MICE." ↴

Lords Inn Agra opens

Lords Hotels and Resorts, the premium chain of mid-market hotels in India, has announced the launch of its 56-key property in Agra – Hotel PL Palace.



TT BUREAU

Located in the heart of the city at a close proximity to the Taj Mahal, the hotel aims at offering affordable luxury. Segmented under its brand, 'Lords Inn', Hotel PL Palace houses 56 contemporary rooms with all facilities, an in-house coffee shop, a specialty restaurant and bar, and is equipped with a health and fitness club, a spa and also a roof-top pool. The hotel room rates start from ₹3500 + taxes. With this

addition, Lords Hotels and Resorts, as a hotel chain has extended to seven states across the country.

"We take immense pride and pleasure in announcing the launch of our 26th property, especially because we did not have presence in the east, until now. Besides, this property will be the kind that will be as inviting for foreign tourists who visit India to witness the grand splen-



from one of the seven wonders of the world," says **P.R. Bansal**, Managing Director, Lords Hotels and Resorts.

"With this new launch we intend to extend our hospitality in Agra and we are positive that both tourists and business travellers alike will appreciate our latest offering," concludes **Rishi Puri**, Vice-President, Lords Hotels and Resorts. ↴

Ambica Empire means business

Ambica Empire, Chennai, is an apt destination for those focusing on a business stay in the heart of the city.



TT BUREAU

Located in close proximity to the city centre in Chennai, Ambica Empire is the right choice for business and corporate professionals. **G. Murali Dharan**, General Manager, Ambica Empire, Chennai, claims, "The hotel is located in the heart of the city where it caters to mostly the corporate sector and sectors like information technology, pharma, foreign tourists, film, manufacturing, insurance, education, etc. With only 25-30 minutes away from railway station and airport, it is close to business hubs like Ambattur Industrial Estate, Guindy Industrial Estate, major corporate offices, hospitals, T. Nagar [shopping hub], and Anna Nagar."



G. Murali Dharan
General Manager
Ambica Empire, Chennai

The hotel has five banquet halls seating up to 500 people, a multi-cuisine restaurant, a coffee shop a pub and spa. Being a purely business class hotel, it accomplishes banqueting, business seminars and conferences. It can also accommodate many business people from different sectors.

For marketing, says **Murali Dharan**, they are vigorously adapting themselves with the digital trend. "We try to understand and adopt modern techniques of marketing with business values along with the client's needs. We also do a number of promotional activities to attract inbound/outbound tourists from customised pan-Asian and European countries and reach them through different media like weekly, monthly magazines (domestic & international), web portals, with an eye on gaining valuable foreign exchange for the country and also to serve high profile corporate clients for their business needs."

In fact, Ambica Empire offers business packages

as well. "We offer various business packages on rooms, food & beverage, banqueting, conferences, etc. In terms of accommodation, we provide weekend offers on various categories with attractive tariffs. There are also corporate discounts and loyalty program with flexible timings, according to the budget and requirement of the guests."

Sales through travel trade makes for a good chunk of business as well. **Murali Dharan** agrees, "We are associated with the top recognised travel agents who handle inbound and outbound tourists. Their remuneration is based on the volume of the business on percentage basis or equivalent to that." ↴



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Novotel Bengaluru Techpark & ibis Bengaluru Techpark

Bengaluru

Maverik Mukerji has been appointed as the General Manager Delegate for Novotel Bengaluru Techpark & Ibis Bengaluru Techpark. Mukerji is a part of the Accor Executive Committee as well and works closely with other Accor leaders to influence the company's strategic decisions across the Indian sub-continent. While Mukerji has been a GM in Accor, in India for over 10 years he previously served as the GM of Novotel Hyderabad Airport. Mukerji has over 20 years of experience in the hospitality industry globally.



Leisure Inn West Gurgaon

Gurugram

Shyam Chaudhary has been appointed the General Manager of Leisure Inn West Gurgaon, a hotel managed by StayWell Hospitality Group. He will be responsible for all aspects of short and long-term planning and preparation of the marketing hotel policies, procedures, relevant legislations, overall operations and the annual budget. Chaudhary has a career of 14 years in the hospitality industry, he has a long-standing track record of developing exceptional service standards and operational procedures and policies. Chaudhary is a graduate from IHM Bhopal with a Bachelor's degree in Hotel Management.



Marasa Sarovar Premier

Tirupati

Subrata Banerjee joined the Marasa Sarovar Premier as General Manager. With an experience of over two decades by his side, Banerjee's forte is and always has been in running some of the best hotels in India. Banerjee was previously affiliated with renowned properties like the InterContinental Hotels (IHG), The Taj Group, Carlson Hotels and Jaypee Hotels. Banerjee is a Hotel Management Graduate as well as a Science Graduate and is also a certified Business Executive from XLRI, Jamshedpur.



Seyfert Sarovar Portico

Dehradun

Sarovar Hotels & Resorts has appointed **Rahul Saxena** as General Manager of Seyfert Sarovar Portico, Dehradun. Prior to this Saxena was General Manager at Country Inn & Suites by Carlson Ahmedabad and General Manager of Sales & Marketing with Hotel Parkland New Delhi and Jaypee Group of Hotels. With over 20 years of experience, he has earlier worked with The Lalit and Grand Mercure New Delhi. He is a commerce graduate from Delhi University and holds a Diploma in Hotel Management from Bhartiya Vidhya Bhawan, New Delhi.



Park Hyatt Goa Resort And Spa

Goa

Shobhit Sawhney is the new General Manager at the Park Hyatt Goa Resort and Spa. An industry veteran with over 16 enriching years across brands and countries, Sawhney was earlier handling the role of Hotel Manager at Grand Hyatt Mumbai, a flagship hotel of the brand. In his new role, he will be heading the luxurious Park Hyatt Goa Resort and Spa - the first Park Hyatt Hotel in India and the only resort property of the brand in the country. Sawhney graduated from IHM Mumbai and was working in the UK with international hotel chains till Hyatt brought him back home.



InterGlobe Technology Quotient

New Delhi

Taruna Soni has been appointed as the Head of Marketing & Communications at InterGlobe Technology Quotient. With 15 years of experience, she was previously engaged as the Communication and Brand Manager at SAFRAN. During her innings at SAFRAN, she has successfully executed multiple well-planned strategies to create brand awareness and its positioning through active offline media usage and online engagement. She holds a masters in dual specialisation - International Business & Marketing from Institute of Management Technology.



Mosaic Hotels

Noida

Soumya Rastogi has been appointed as Head of Sales & Marketing at Mosaic Hotels, a hospitality venture of Shipra Group. His extensive 12 years experience has made efficient ground for the group's various properties like Mosaic Noida, Mosaic Mussoorie and Hive Hotels, Alwar. Prior to this, he had worked for ZO Rooms as Account Director of Sales & Marketing. He has also served for brands like Accor, Grand Hyatt, Radisson, ITC Hotels respectively. Rastogi possesses outstanding business acumen and laced with the talent of attracting new corporate clients and capitalising upon revenue generation opportunities.



Park Hyatt Goa Resort and Spa also appointed **Rakesh Ramola** as its Food and Beverage Manager. Ramola brings more than 13 years of expertise in the hospitality industry. In his new role, Ramola will be responsible for upholding and enhancing the culinary experience at the resort through innovation and cutting-edge concepts and processes. Prior to this assignment, he was the Assistant Director of Food and Beverage at Grand Hyatt Mumbai and has worked in some of the finest hotels in the world including the Hyatt Regency Mumbai, Grand Hyatt Doha and Hyatt Place Pune Hinjewadi.



Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre & HICC

Hyderabad

Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and HICC has appointed **Gagandeep Singh Hanjra** as the new Director of Revenue Management. Hanjra has completed his Masters in Business Management from IILM-Gurgaon and will be overlooking the revenue and proceeds management of both - the hotel and the convention centre. He has over eight years of experience in the hospitality genre, working at a senior echelon with eminent hotel chains across India namely The Leela, Lalit, and The Taj Group.



TALKING PEOPLE

Stephen Peppard, International Sales & Marketing Representative for Phillip Island Nature Parks, does not let stress take over his life. He loves spending time with his wife and two sons. "I enjoy fishing and am lucky that I live on an Island that has some fantastic fishing spots. I also love watching cricket test matches," he says. His most memorable holiday moment in India was driving an auto-rickshaw for a short distance, after agreeing to give the driver a tip!



Simon Akeroyd, Vice President-Corporate Strategy and Business Development, Amadeus Asia Pacific, enjoys the sun, sand and sea in Bali as much as he likes his high-tech gadgets. He spends most of his free time surfing in the country, which is also his favourite destination because of the active surfing scenario, and is equally passionate about motorboats. His affinity towards South East Asia is even more evident in his fondness for Thai cuisine. While big hotel chains draw him in, quaint boutique hotels catch his fancy every now and then.



When stress levels are high **Srinivas Srirangam**, GM, Novotel Imagica Khopoli, turns to music. "What intrigues me is the way just a few notes in different combination can capture emotions that differ so greatly. I love experimenting with and mixing music. If not the hospitality industry, I would have probably chosen to become a DJ," he says. He is passionate about travelling as well because of the rich learning experience it offers. Watching the light and sound show at Abu Simbel temples in Egypt with his wife is his most memorable holiday moment. Africa features as his favourite international destination while the North East in India tops his list of places he loves closer home.





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Ancillary products are a must

Ankur Bhatia, Executive Director, Bird Group, believes that offering ancillary products to the clients is the need of the hour for travel agents, and despite the mushrooming of OTAs, they are here to stay.



NISHA VERMA

Q What are your views on the tourism industry in India?

The industry is growing in the right direction, despite the given circumstances within our country, with issues in terms of infrastructure and also bottlenecks in aviation. From the group's point of view, we are involved in most of the activities within the aviation and hospitality industry. I would definitely say that the growth and potential of the country is also helping us fuel our growth, as well as making us chart our expansion plans.

Q What is your share in the GDS market?

We are the number one player in the marketplace and the nearest competitor for us is 50 per cent of our size. We are Number One in most of the segments, especially in the OTA business, where we have market share of more than 80 per cent. And it is only growing both organically as well as in market share.

Q Today GDSs are paying the airlines to use them. Why such turn of events?

I don't think it's a new formula or a new direction. Incentives have always been part of the business. We have been in the market for the last 25 years now. The agents have always been incentivised, initially with the hardware and then based on their productivity and loyalty they were getting bonus. It's been like this for the last 25 years and it will continue.

Q What according to you is the future of travel agents?

Future of travel agents is very robust, specifically in a country which is as big and diverse as India. Today we service around 40,000 point of sales in 200 cities across the country and I think it is only growing. India adds around 100-150

travel agencies every month and I haven't seen international travel agencies or big agencies who have wound up. Most of the traditional travel agencies have survived despite the fact that there has been an upsurge in the online and other players of business. In fact they have actually grown both in terms of numbers and their profitability. Thus, the travel agencies are there to stay both online as well as the traditional brick and mortar ones. And

Q What are the expectations from Amadeus?

Innovation — and we've been doing that for the last 25 years. Also, we are investing a lot in our product, specifically in self booking tools, which are being used both in the Indian market as well as across the world. These are the products, which have been developed in India keeping in focus the corporations or clients in mind that service through

“We have got two kinds of products for the travel agencies. One is GDS and the other is BirdRes in which we've actually consolidated content from railways, events, SIM card providers, as well as other travel providers. It is available now on the desktop of the travel agencies.”

Ankur Bhatia
Executive Director
Bird Group



the agencies would certainly ride on the growth wave which India is witnessing right now in terms of numbers. The main reason being that India is a very high touch market, and secondly the penetration of credit cards is extremely low, because of which traditional travel agencies would survive in the future.

a travel agency. Hence, we feel that such products are a differentiator and we continue to actually invest in these kinds of products.

Q Tell us about the latest report that Amadeus has come up with?

We just came out with a study on leisure travel and this time it is high-end luxury travel within leisure that we have worked on. This year we've looked at which destination, areas and services seasoned luxury traveller wants to look at. We keep on investing in these reports because they help the travel agency to plan its sales strategy for the end customer.

Q Please tell us about the upcoming Dusit D2?

We've got four properties right now — two in England and two in Delhi including the latest one — Dusit D2, which is yet to open. It is a 216-key hotel and is located at Aerocity and we have a total of five different F&B outlets, shopping arcades as well as a cinema, which is a differentiator. The property is the most high-end luxury property in Aerocity, and we hope we'd be able to bring it to the market very soon. ↴

High in the Sky

- ↴ Bird Group services around 40,000 point of sales in 200 cities across the country
- ↴ Birdres has approximately 400 plus corporate implants
- ↴ The group has a GDS market share of more than 80 per cent in the



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FEEL-GOOD ABOUT INDIA

India is fast emerging as a destination offering first world treatments at third world costs, skilled professionals, quality treatment. That coupled with its knowledge in ayurveda, unani, Panchakarma, yoga and homeopathy, it has an advantage over all its competitors within Asia like Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines.

Chennai, Mumbai, Andhra Pradesh and National Capital Region are the most favoured medical tourism destinations for the medical tourist population who avail treatments in India. Rishikesh, the yoga capital of India, and Kerala, the wellness hub for ayurveda, attract large number of tourists but the potential is still untapped. There is no dedicated web portal to connect the wellness traveller to various public/private wellness facilitators, tour operators, and hospitals which consumes time and energy when fending for the right centre. The lack of regulation and uniform accreditation norms for spas and ayurveda centres deters the check of quality standards being offered. To add to the challenges, the procurement of medical visa is cumbersome and complicated. India needs an additional 1.8 million beds to achieve the WHO target of 2 beds per 1,000 people by 2025. Also, an additional 1.54 million doctors would be required, and an investment of \$86 billion required to achieve these targets according to a whitepaper by Grant Thornton and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

With the National Medical and Wellness Tourism Promotion Board put in place, the Government has shown its interest to emphasize this niche segment. The wellness traveller who spends 130 per cent more than any other is a lucrative and addressable market for India. The government has to up its game and with private collaboration lend speed to the growth of this segment.

ANKITA SAXENA

NEWS IN BRIEF



U&I DEBUTS IN WELLNESS WITH ASHOKA SPA

Mumbai-based DMC, U&I Holidays, specialists in Indonesia and Maldives, has branched out into the wellness management with its new Ashoka Spa in Saki Naka, Andheri (East) Mumbai. **Ashish Indulkar**, Director, Ashoka Spa by U&I Wellness Management, says, "This is our first venture into the wellness segment and we plan to come up with at least 10-12 more outlets in five years. We started operations in April and we are getting very good response." The spa has five types of packages, including full-body treatments, foot treatments, body scrubs, six types of facials and its signature Ashoka Spa treatment. It also has aromatherapy, Swedish massage, and ayurveda therapies. The highlight of the spa is that all its products come from Bali.



Yoga programmes included in Tourist Visa and eTV

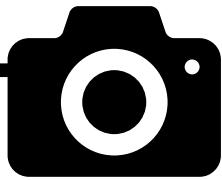
Short-term yoga programmes will now be included in Tourist Visa and e-Tourist Visa (eTV). 'Attending a short term Yoga programme,' and 'short duration medical treatment under Indian systems of medicines' has been added in the list of permissible activities under Tourist Visa and eTV. Presently, a Tourist Visa is granted to a foreigner whose sole objective of visiting India is recreation, sightseeing and casual visit.



World Health Organization

WHO to certify yoga and Ayurveda programmes

The Ministry of AYUSH and World Health Organisation (WHO) have signed a project collaboration agreement for cooperation on promoting the quality, safety and effectiveness of service provision in traditional and complementary medicine. The PCA will for the first time deliver WHO benchmarks for training in yoga as well as practise in traditional systems of medicine such as ayurveda, unani and Panchakarma.



INTERNATIONAL YOGA DAY



GOING GLOBAL

175 nations, including USA, Canada and China, co-sponsored the resolution to commemorate June 21 as International Yoga Day. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General, United Nations (left), performed Yoga at the UN Headquarters.



REACHING MASSES

The 1st International Day of Yoga in 2015 set two Guinness World Records: the largest yoga class with 35,985 people performing yoga at a single venue; and the largest number of nationalities at a yoga event — invitees from 84 countries took part to set the record.



Kairali's Holistic Wellness Centre & Spa debuts in USA

Kairali Ayurvedic Group has opened its first Holistic Wellness Centre & Spa Centre - Kairali World of Ayurveda in Connecticut, US. KWOA will offer wellness techniques, rejuvenating body treatments, health and diet counselling, holistic healing services and a wide range of authentic Ayurvedic therapies in the US market. The brand is expected to open 10 more centres by 2016 end in Kanpur, Lucknow, Goa, Mumbai and Thane cities of India and in two more cities of Bulgaria and Czech Republic in Europe.

Medical Tourism Promotion Council in Maharashtra

Maharashtra will set up a new medical tourism promotion council to tap the potential of the medical tourism segment. The aim is to support tie-ups between hospitals and hotels, so the state can attract more medical tourists for cosmetic surgery, dentistry, fertility treatment, orthopedic and cardiac surgery. Over two lakh medical tourists come to Mumbai, but often a number of them go to other states, says **Valsa Nair Singh**, Secretary, Tourism and Cultural Affairs, Government of Maharashtra. According to Singh, a large number come from the Middle East.



Westin Pushkar & W Goa to open on Sept 1, 2016

Starwood Hotels and Resorts' 98-room Westin Pushkar Resort and Spa is set to open in September this year. The hotel has a 560-square-metre ballroom, totalling more than 900 square metres of welcoming space and features a comprehensive range of amenities and services. Starwood Hotels and Resorts is pitching its growth plan in the South Asia market with the opening of three new properties this year. **Barun Gupta**, Global Account Director, Starwood Hotels and Resorts informs that other than Westin Pushkar, W Goa is also expected to open in September and St. Regis Maldives will open by the end of this year. The 160-room W Retreat & Spa Goa to open September 1, has two grand ballrooms, a function room, three meeting/VIP rooms, a function lawn and a pre-function area provide enough space for all your guests. The hotel has six meeting spaces with the largest one being 600 square metres.





1st all suite luxury resort in Langkawi

St. Regis Hotels and Resorts launched its first all-suite luxury resort St. Regis Langkawi, Malaysia, offering four private overwater villas and 85 suites. Spanning over 8,600 sq. ft., the brand's signature Iridium Spa enables guests to indulge in a range of specialty massages and well-being treatments. Other facilities include a salon, an infinity swimming pool, and a natural-salt water lagoon.



Hambantota Resort & Spa opens in Sri Lanka

Shangri-La's 300-room Hambantota Resort & Spa recently opened in Sri Lanka. At the property, spa enthusiasts can indulge at CHI, The Spa, where Ayurvedic treatments are being offered using organic herbs and natural products after a personal consultation with the guest. The property has 12 indoor and outdoor treatment rooms for stress relieving massages, facials and body treatments. A variety of opening packages are being offered to the guests, including an all-inclusive offer for two, priced at \$247 per night, valid until December 22, 2016. Room rates start at \$216, single or double occupancy, and include breakfast.

Wellness Oasis: Four Seasons Resort Oahu opens in Ko Olina

The newest Four Seasons in Hawaii is located on the ocean in the resort community of Ko Olina. The 17-storey terraced hotel features an expansive spa and wellness oasis, on-site tennis centre, privileged access to the Ko Olina Golf Club, among other amenities. The new Resort Oahu at Ko Olina is the fifth hotel in the Four Seasons Hawaiian Collection which offers opportunities of island-hopping and multi-destination vacation possibilities to the guests.



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Why come to India



The new-age wellness globetrotter is out to seek a healthier and natural way of living, away from the hustle and bustle of city life. India is the only country in the world which can satiate this discerning traveller with its wellness offerings such as yoga, Ayurvedic spa, alternative medicines.

The Global Wellness Institute (GWI) defines wellness tourism as travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one's personal well-being. While some wellness travellers may take a trip primarily for the purpose of wellness tourism, others may engage in wellness related activities as part of a trip (secondary-purpose wellness tourism). Both segments represent unique and important opportunities for businesses, destinations, regions, and countries that want to attract this high-yield client segment.

According to a study conducted by Stanford Research Institute (SRI International), wellness tourism was an \$439 billion industry worldwide in 2014 within the \$3.2 trillion global tourism industry, representing 14 per cent of all tourism spendings. It also projected India to be number one globally for growth in wellness tourism over the next five years, clocking over 20 per cent gain annually through 2017.

India is fast becoming a medical tourism magnet, attracting discerning travellers from the world over. According to a CII-Grant Thornton white paper, the global medical tourism market was estimated to \$17 billion in 2015 and it will reach a market value of \$40 billion by 2020 growing at a CAGR of 17 per cent during the forecast period. Indian medical tourism is expected to grow from a current market size of \$3 billion to \$ 7-8 billion by 2020.

The Global Wellness Tourism Economy Report by GWI states that as conventional medical industry increasingly turns towards preventive, alternative and traditional approaches in order to deliver more effective care and improve costs, the lines between medical and wellness tourism will in some instances blur.

India is considered amongst the top three destinations for medical tourism in Asia. With world class treatments and state-of-the-art hospitals, the key competitive advantage that India possesses in medical tourism compared to other countries lies in

WELLNESS TRAVELLERS...

SEEK	DO	VISIT
 Physical	CAM, Integrative medicine, Diagnostics, Health Check-ups, Chronic condition management Massage, Bathing, Body treatments, Facials, Hair & nails	Integrated Health Centres, CAM Centres, Wellness Centres Healthy Hotels, Wellness Cruises Health Resorts & Sanatoria
 Mental	Yoga, Meditation, Ta chi, Qigong, Biofeedback	Spas Salon, Baths & Springs, Thalasso
 Spiritual	Prayer, Volunteering, Time with Family & friends, Time alone	Yoga Studios, Martial Arts Studios, Yoga Retreats, Spiritual Retreats, Ashrams
 Emotional	Retreats, Life coaching, Stress reduction, Reading, Music & arts	Lifestyle Retreats, Wellness Retreats
 Environmental	Hiking, Biking, Taking walks, Nature visits	Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Nature Preserves
 Social	Gym visits, Fitness Classes, Stretching, Pilates	Gyms, Fitness Centres, Organic & Natural Restaurants, Health Food Stores

Source: 2013 & 2014 Global Wellness Tourism Economy Report

MEDICAL TREATMENT COST COMPARISON

Procedure cost (in USD)	India	Thailand	Singapore	Malaysia	U.A.E.
Heart bypass	7,000	11,000	18,500	9,000	40,900
Heart valve replacement	9,500	10,000	12,500	9,000	50,600
Hip replacement	7,020	12,000	12,000	10,000	46,000
Knee replacement	9,200	10,000	13,000	8,000	40,200

Source: 'Indian Healthcare Services', J.P.Morgan, 12 March 2014

the cost effectiveness it offers to its medical tourists. If travel and accommodation expenses are considered along with the treatment cost, the overall expenditure is much lower than the treatment cost in the UK, the US or many other countries. A patient coming to India for a medical treatment can save 30-70 per cent of expenditure in comparison to other countries offering the same services.

Bangladesh and Afghanistan dominate the Indian medical tourist arrivals with 34 per cent share of the total numbers. With a current share of only 30 per cent, Africa, GCC and CIS regions present the maximum possible opportunity for the Indian healthcare sector. Currently, medical tourists from these regions favour the South East Asian medical corridors.

Alternative medicine techniques like sidha, unani, acupuncture and homeopathy give India the edge over its competitors like Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, and the UAE.



Rejuvenating the SOUL

Kerala is probably the only place in the world where the rich theories of Ayurveda have been interpreted for practical and day to day application to cure and heal.



ANKITA SAXENA

Breathtaking beaches, enchanting backwaters, and hill stations mark the land of Kerala. Beyond the beauty and indulging landscapes, Kerala is also a paradise for wellness tourism in India. Its equable climate, natural abundance of forests and the cool monsoon season is perfect for Ayurvedic therapies and natural medicines to work.

Kerala's 5000-year-old tradition of Ayurveda is unparalleled. This ancient healing system has continued to thrive over the centuries, preserving the secrets to a healthy living. Long before the world woke up to Ayurveda, it was a way of life in Kerala – connected to almost every aspect of daily life.

Travellers are attracted to the Ayurvedic and wellness services in Kerala, but medical tourism is gaining appeal equally. Kerala has pioneered and concentrated on efforts to provide quality medical facilities and low-cost treatments for Indian as well as international patients. According to a whitepaper by Grant Thornton and Confederation of Indian Industry — "Transformative Evolution: From 'wellness' to 'medical wellness' tourism in Kerala," the state with a 5-7 per cent of current market share, translating in \$200mn of medical tourism revenues, can easily capture a 10-15 per cent of the estimated market by 2020 signifying a localised medical tourism market of a size \$1 billion. Several factors such



Types of THERAPIES



Rejuvenation Therapy- Rasayan Chikitsa

Tones up the skin and strengthens tissues. One can enjoy a rejuvenating spa which includes head and face massages with medicated oils and creams, body massage with herbal oil or powder by hand and foot, internal rejuvenating medicines and medicated or herbal steam baths



Immunisation and longevity- Kayakalp Chikitsa

Prime treatment for retarding the ageing process, arresting degenerating body cells and immunisation of the system. This therapy includes intake of Ayurvedic medicines and a comprehensively designed body programme



Body Sudation- Sweda Karma

Medicated steam bath to eliminate toxins from the body, improves skin tone and complexion, reduces fat and is recommended for certain rheumatic diseases, particularly for pain. Herbs are boiled and the steam is passed over the body for 10- 20 minutes daily. Its also includes massage with herbal oils or herbal powder to improve blood circulation in the body

Overall fitness- Panchakarma Treatment

A five-fold treatment for mental and physical well-being, tunes the body, organs, mind, breath, nerves and purifies the blood



Mental and physical well-being

Meditation and yoga forms the core of this treatment. Exercises to hone concentration to improve health and achieve peace of mind are the highlight of this therapy. Practice of various forms of yoga, breathing exercises help in rejuvenating the body from within



as low-cost treatment options, reduced waiting time, world-class quality and personalised services combine to make this rich, cultural and leisure destination an attractive proposition for medical tourism in India.

Advanced infrastructure and good connectivity is an advantage in Kerala. Three international airports at Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode allow visitors to fly to any part of Kerala in less than three hours. Kerala is also home to qualified professionals and with a 100 percent literacy rate, it is considered as the 'nursing hub' for regions West of Europe. Kerala's certification system classifies ayurveda centres into Green Leaf and Olive Leaf categories based on the quality and standard of services and products. There are 1581 registered AYUSH Hospitals and over 100 government certified Green Leaf and Olive Leaf Ayurveda centres.

One can learn traditional Ayurveda, meditation and hatha Yoga at several spiritual retreats in destinations such as



Kovalam, Kollam, Idukki, Thrissur, and Thiruvananthapuram.

Kerala also focuses on the healing powers of vegetarian food prepared in an Ayurvedic kitchen, and natural remedies created from freshly picked herbs.

A regular yoga retreat for beginners includes workshops, nutrition, cooking, chants, meditation and pranayama. With Ayurvedic institutions, resorts and spas located in some of the most scenic locations of the state, your healing holiday will never be far away.

JEWEL IN THE CITY OF TAJ MAHAL

Agra's iconic hotel, **The Clarks Shiraz**, with the distinction of hosting legends like Jackie Kennedy, Neil Armstrong, Mohammed Ali, is recently renovated and become the latest 5 star delux hotel in the city.

A long table banquet at the world famous **Mughal Room**, High Tea or Sun-downer, Bar-b-que at the terrace **Sunset Lounge**, over looking the Taj Mahal & Agra Fort, an AV for the group at **Arjumand hall**, the new **Checkers Buffet**, the refurbished rooms & bathrooms, Gym by the garden, recreation center and signature massage at **Adiba Spa**, enrich the overall holiday experience.

Located in the prestigious Cantonement area, adjoining the Agra Golf Course, Clarks Shiraz offers views of open spaces, greenery and dense trees all around, looking like the greenest part of India to many visitors. A unique campus of serenity, only 2 km from The Taj Mahal.

Awarded Best Luxury Wedding & MICE Resort 2015 (North & East)
Awarded Game Changer 2015 (North & East)
Awarded Best Leisure Hotel 2015 (North & East)



HOTEL

 AGRA - INDIA

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Phone: (+91 562) 2226121-32
E-mail: sales@hotelclarks.in, resv@hotelclarks.in





Packages

- **Ananda Detox:** Ayurvedic Panchakarma treatments, aromatherapy, yoga, meditation, customised diet
- **Yogic Detox:** Different hatha yogic cleansing techniques (shatkriya) to detox in a natural and effective way and balance the doshas
- **Ayurvedic Rejuvenation:** Restore vitality of the body; enhance the body's immunity through traditional Panchakarma treatments for complete well-being.
- **Weight Management:** Focuses on detox therapies, personalised fitness programme, yoga, meditation and diet for sustained results.
- **Stress Management:** A holistic approach of Ayurveda, yoga, Tibetan and international experiences along with Reiki healing to reduce stress and relax the mind.



Unwind in Solitude

A sanctuary for relaxation and revitalisation, the spa experience has become synonymous with well-being. We showcase some of the leading spa centres in India where you can break away from the toxic city life and unwind.

The evolving times and trends are witness to the fact that today travellers want more from a vacation than just photographs and souvenirs. Today's travellers wish to spend time improving aspects of their lives. With emphasis on health and total well-being, the spa experience is earning growing attention from travellers from across the globe. Spa resorts recognise stress reduction and rejuvenating body and mind as a major indicator of good health. Earlier considered a luxury, visiting a spa now has become more of a routine exercise than an extravagance. According to International Chamber for Service Industry, there are 2,300 spas in India and 700 new spas, both homegrown and international brands will open in the next four years.

Spas in India are not just Ayurvedic and herbal but have evolved into an industry which offers fusion between the best of East and West. The scenic location, the professional masseuse, the aromatic concoctions to sooth the body and relax the mind make a spa experience relaxing and worth a holiday.

ANANDA SPA IN THE HIMALAYAS

A luxury destination spa in the Himalayan foothills, Ananda integrates traditional Ayurveda, yoga, meditation and vedanta with international wellness experiences, fitness and healthy organic cuisine to restore balance and harmony. Nestled in the 100 acre Maharaja's Palace Estate, Ananda in the Himalayas is surrounded by the graceful Sal forests, overlooking the spiritual town of Rishikesh and the Ganges river valley.

RELAX AND REJUVENATE

At Ananda one can experience fascinating global combinations of wellness concocted by blending the best-known therapies garnered from every corner of the world. Going back in time, researching ancient texts, the knowledge gleaned from the secrets of Egyptian princesses, the practices of ancient Rome, the rituals of the pagan Greeks, the origins of the first spas from the practices of Europe, the spiritual teachings from the Masters of Japan, have all been brought together in new ways in the form of revitalising treatments. The sensuous aromatherapy, the deeply relaxing Swedish massage, the gentle healing touch of Reiki, the pressure points and tension release work through Reflexology are but a few of the experiences that help to revitalise and rejuvenate at Ananda.

FACILITIES

With 78 rooms, 6 hole golf course, a spa building spread over 24,000 square feet with 24 treatment rooms, with over 80 select body and beauty treatment programs to choose from, a temperature controlled outdoor lap pool, state-of-the-art 16 station life-cycle gym and billiards in the Viceregal Palace are experiences unto themselves. The amphitheatre and Hawa Mahal lend vantage point for guests to enjoy the lush natural landscape of the estate.

VISITING MASTERS

Special workshops and private sessions with visiting masters in different areas of well-being are offered. The therapists, healers and Ayurvedic doctors visit from around the world to share their talents with those who wish to explore the realms of holistic well-being.



PACKAGES

- **Himalayan Romance Retreat:** Leave the world behind while you and your loved one indulge in a body pampering treatment session.
- **Journey to Tibet:** Herbal poultice massage and sound and vibration therapy
- **Exotic Spice Body Envelopment:** This anti-oxidant, detoxifying and anti-ageing body wrap repairs your skin and leaves you radiant and relaxed, toning and tightening the skin. While your body luxuriates in the spice blend, your therapist pampers you with a neck, face, and scalp massage. This treatment concludes with an application of moisturiser and a spicy mist to awaken your senses.
- **Classic Hungarian body wrap:** Gentle detoxifying exfoliation using sea salt and mineral-rich Hungarian thermal mud

WILDFLOWER HALL, SHIMLA

Nestled in dense cedar and pine forests, offering awe-inspiring views of the magnificent snow peaks, Wildflower Hall, Shimla in the Himalayas is an Oberoi resort that allows guests the opportunity of immersing themselves in the breathtaking natural surroundings. This region is a popular holiday destination renowned for its natural beauty, extensive flora and fauna, and options it offers to those in quest for quiet and tranquility.

FACILITIES

The 85-room resort is built to the most exacting international standards, combining the charm and beauty indigenous to the region with all the luxurious and contemporary facilities. The Spa Pavilions and Spa Suites are tranquil havens to revitalise and offers a unique holistic wellness programme, which combines rejuvenating spa treatments with yoga and meditation sessions. Each Spa Suite and Spa Pavilion room is furnished with two massage beds, a freestanding bathtub and steam shower making it ideal for a couple to enjoy a treatment together which includes a combination of a cleansing scrub, body wrap, head and body massage followed by a bath. The spa also includes a salon, an indoor heated swimming pool, an outdoor heated whirlpool and a well-equipped fitness centre.

WELLNESS MENU

The extensive spa menu features holistic, non-clinical therapies, massages and beauty treatments incorporating ancient Ayurvedic principles, aromatherapy and western techniques administered by skilful therapists. The therapies on the menu include massages, exotic body scrubs, floral baths and rejuvenating beauty treatments.

In addition to offering time honoured therapies like Balinese massage and a wide range of Ayurvedic treatments, the spa menu incorporates the therapeutic sound and vibrations of Tibetan singing bowls to cleanse and enhance the chakra energy centres of the body; heated lava shells to synergise warmth and deep pressure in a massage and facials and body wraps using products of the renowned Hungarian spa brand, Omorovicza.

HILTON SHILLIM ESTATES RETREAT AND SPA

Offering a sanctuary for the body, mind and spirit, Hilton Shillim Estate Retreat and Spa is nestled in an unspoiled sylvan setting amidst the magnificent landscape of the Western Ghats. Spread across 320 acres of picturesque wilderness within the private Shillim Estate and a short drive from Mumbai and Pune, Hilton Shillim features among the most comprehensive spa facilities in Asia with an all-villa accommodation with extensive and breathtaking views from private decks or balconies, extensive culinary fare and a range of recreational options.

WELLNESS MENU

With expert therapists and visiting Masters, Shillim Spa offers a range of holistic wellness experiences and programmes that are customised to the needs of the guest and integrate the ancient philosophic, spiritual and artistic wisdom of South Asia, with modern international techniques to restore the vitality and natural harmony of the body, mind and spirit. Healing traditions at the property include acupressure, Reiki, pranic healing, Ayurveda, yoga, chakra cleansing, meditation, naturopathy, hydrotherapy, water, pilates.

FACILITIES

While the retreat's mission 'To Conserve; To Sustain; To Heal,' permeates every experience at the property; it is at the Shillim Spa that it is reinforced. The 70-acre Shillim Spa features 18 Spa Villas and 15 Spa Pool Villas with dedicated treatment areas, a unique Meditation Cave, Yoga Pavilion, 17 Treatment Suites with private gardens and al fresco showers, five Consultation Rooms, four Relaxation Terraces, Conventional and Infrared saunas and Hydrotherapy tubs.

PACKAGES

- **Shillim Wellness Experience:** Includes spa experiences, forest treks, yoga and meditation and healthy cuisine.
- **Executive Health Programme - Prevention & De-stress:** A comprehensive and integrative health programme which assists in understanding stress, its effects and ways to eliminate it through spa treatments and holistic changes in lifestyle.
- **Shillim Endurance Programme:** Improves physical strength through pilates, power yoga and ashtanga yoga.
- **Radiance Programme-Ultimate Anti-Ageing & Beauty Enhancement:** Enhances beauty through carefully chosen beauty treatments including Pranayama and meditation.





SURYA SAMUDRA- NIRAAMAYA RETREATS

Amidst lush greenery, alcove of coconut trees, and surrounded by the Arabian Sea, rests Surya Samudra, by Niraamaya Retreats, one of the only few that provide a seaside boutique experience in Kovalam, Kerala. A haven for wellness and rejuvenation seekers, spa experiences at Niraamaya are both exclusive and unforgettable. One can go on invigorating sensory journeys with the best of traditional Ayurvedic and international therapies; experience yoga sessions on a platform at the edge of a stone cliff where the sound of ocean waves constantly soothe the senses, or the cliff-side rock-cut swimming pool providing infinity views beyond the sea and glorious sunsets, one is truly in for an absolutely exhilarating experience.

WELLNESS MENU

The Niraamaya Spa draws from natural therapeutic traditions across the world to reinvigorate, rejuvenate and restore your body, mind and soul. The spa includes ayurveda; perfected over 5,000 years in ancient India, Chinese treatments like Reflexology and the best of European natural healing practices. Skin care rituals (body polishes/wraps) and Vichy shower facility add hydrotherapy experience to the wellness treatments. Other wellness facilities include yoga, meditation, Pranayama, Reiki, acupressure and astrological consultations. The luxurious heritage accommodation seamlessly blends modern amenities



PACKAGES

- **Slim Body by Ayurveda:** Body massages by herbal powders, oils and internal herbal medications; specific dietary regime and fitness Yoga
- **Body Purification and Detoxification Programme:** Purifies the body to attain proper balance of the three bio-regulating energies or tridoshas (Vata, Pitta and Kapha).
- **Ayurveda Stress and Strain Buster:** Programme for the release of day-to-day stress and strain.
- **Bone and Joint Care Programme:** Includes special treatments for neck pain, low back pain and joint problems.
- **Spa Niraamaya Essence of Wellness Programme:** Integrates Ayurveda, the Oriental as well as European natural healing practices to manage stress, nurture the skin and enhance self-defense against lifestyle disorders.

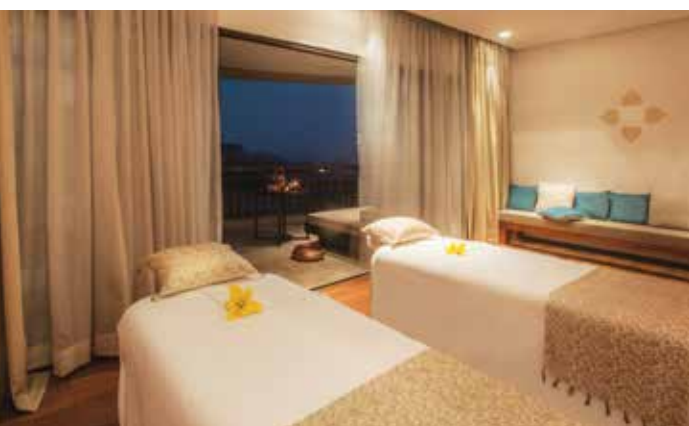


JIVA SPA- VIVANTA BY TAJ SURAJKUND

Sprawling over 18,500 sq.ft., Jiva Spa embodies the essence of historic Surajkund. The spa promises a retreat for the seekers of urban rejuvenation. Inspired by the ancient Indian Baoli in design and concept, the Jiva Grande at Vivanta by Taj Surajkund, provides a sanctuary of tranquility where dedicated therapists combine timeless wellness concepts with modern therapeutic wisdom. It is the perfect sanctuary for relaxation with a large resort like feel, large rooms with balconies overlooking the Aravalis and the courtyard which boasts of a unique water and fire play at night is rejuvenating to the senses. The entire environment of the hotel helps in rejuvenation and relaxation.

FACILITIES

The spa spans two floors and consists of 10 treatment rooms, a luxury spa suite, beauty



stations, wet facilities, fitness centre with yoga room and a large outdoor pool. Featuring trained experts that use exclusive natural products in a fresh and harmonious setting, you get to make the most of a well-equipped fitness zone, an exclusive lifestyle boutique and a studio dedicated to yoga and meditation.

WELLNESS MENU

One of the most opted therapies, Vishrama is a relaxing deep muscular massage to melt away the stress. Application of hot compress of therapeutic Indian herbs on the tired and sore muscles followed by a skilled hands massage relaxes the body; Pehelwan Maalish, another traditional massage is a vigorous deep tissue massage with the signature aromatherapy oil followed by body stretches to relieve aching, sore and tense muscles; Champi the most famous Indian head massage releases muscular tension from the head, neck and shoulders, creating a deep sense of relaxation and joy as well as clarity of thought specially after a long travel; Jivanidra is another signature experience, a sleep program aimed at improving quality of sleep.



PACKAGES

- **Sushupti-Dreamless sleep:** Includes aromatic footbath, a body wrap made from 22 herbs, scalp and body massage, warm bath of nourishing raw milk with rose essence and petals, hot packs placed on the body and a face massage to feel pampered from head to toe.
- **Ventoz-Indian Cupping:** An ancient treatment where heat in a glass is used to create vacuum and ease knots and sore points in the body. This is followed by a deep massage where signature spa oil is readily absorbed by the skin.
- **Vishuddhi:** Exfoliation is performed using silk gloves to stimulate the circulation of blood, lymph and energy followed by a warm cocoon of traditional Indian body wrap and a full body lymphatic drainage massage.

Treating with care

Apollo Hospitals and The Suryaa, New Delhi, together offer medical travellers easy and comfortable accommodation while undergoing treatment at the multi-specialty hospital.



Apollo Hospitals is one of the most prominent healthcare entity which medical tourists can rely on for world-class treatment at minimal costs. With a chain of hospitals across the country, Apollo boasts of internationally trained doctors, cost advantage, latest technology and no waiting time, making it a lucrative choice to be treated at. While the guests are taking various treatments at Apollo, the attendants and the patients are offered an easy accommodation at The Suryaa. The hotel in New Delhi, creates a vibrant and lively ambience for its guests right in the

SERVICES BY APOLLO

- Flight arrangements and visa assistance; assistance in visa extensions if required
- Interpreters in various languages
- Any special dietary needs for the patients
- Coordination of foreign exchange requirements
- Air ambulance facility
- Local sight-seeing and tourism related arrangements

heart of the city. The hotel's elegant spread of rooms and suites with spectacular views are bound to rejuvenate the guest after a strenuous day at the hospital. A host of dining options and custom-crafted celebrations are offered to the guests.

The hotel offers all-day dining restaurants and a sky lounge, for a memorable dining experience. Customised dietary requirements are looked into carefully by the chef who works according to the doctor's advice. The tourists visiting the hotel for medical and wellness purposes



are provided with handicap-enabled rooms, convenience in travelling to the hospitals and seasoned and caring service staff to look after the patients for recuperative and post operative care and a fitness centre.

The Apollo International Patient Care Programme offers vital services to the patients far away from their homes, friends and families. The staff also provides personalised services. The hospital offers treatment along with ancillary services making it a one stop shop for medical tourists who come to India for treatment.

“ In 2015 we saw an approximate 10 per cent increase over 2014 in the number of guests from the medical and wellness segment of tourism.”

DHANANJAY KUMAR
General Manager
The Suryaa





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Impetus to India's Medical Worth

Low cost, advanced medical treatments, qualified professionals, Yoga and a vast network of wellness facilities, India is the destination to watch out for holistic well-being.

With increase in healthcare awareness and rise in disposable income simultaneously, wellness is becoming a priority across the globe. According to the 'Medical Value Travel in India' report by FICCI and KPMG, estimated at \$78.6 billion as of 2012, this sector has emerged as the one of the largest sectors in India and is poised to grow at a CAGR of 15 per cent to reach approximately \$158.2 billion by 2017.

The report further states that, according to industry estimates, around seven million patients are said to be travelling each year to receive medical care. Due to the highly fragmented nature of the industry and different definitions, there are various estimates of the market size. The global medical tourism industry was estimated at \$10.5 billion in 2012. It is expected to grow at a CAGR of 17.9 per cent from 2013-19 to reach \$32.5 billion in 2019.

Suman Billa, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, explains, "The National Medical and Wellness Tourism Promotion Board, constituted to market and promote medical and wellness segment in India, met for its first meeting and subsequently, the committee delineated the work into three subsequent committees."

VISAS TO EASE MEDICAL TRAVEL

It has been suggested to the Ministry of Home Affairs to make medical visa on electronic format. The



There is a need for clear strategy, dedicated marketing and campaign material to promote this segment. We are planning on attending events both national and international and making a pitch for this segment to be highlighted at the right platform. ”

SUMAN BILLA
Joint Secretary
Ministry of Tourism



MEDICAL VISA

The government of India provides medical visa for foreign nationals across the world seeking specialty medical treatment in India for extended periods.

- A visa-on-arrival system for tourists allows foreign nationals to stay in India for 30 days for medical procedures.
- Maximum of two attendants who are blood relatives are permissible to accompany the patient under separate Medical Attendant visas. These visas are known as MX visas and its validity is same as the patient medical visa.
- The preliminary duration of medical visa is up to a year or duration of the treatment, whichever is less. The visa allows maximum of three entries during one year.

INDIAN MEDICAL VISA REQUIREMENTS

- Tourists from Kenya, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Israel, Pakistan, Nigeria and Somalia should have Yellow Fever vaccination certificate and must carry Oral Polio Vaccination (OPV)

Certificate taken six weeks prior to entry. This certificate is obligatory for both adults and children.

- Every medical document is checked by Indian Missions and Posts placed abroad to confirm whether the request to obtain a medical visa is genuine or not.
- One may also need to provide satisfactory details to the Missions that initial medical advice has been sought in the country of residence or origin and consequently has got an advice to get treatment in India.
- One can get a medical visa to India only for treatment in reputed and recognised medical centres.
- High priority is given to 'M' visa applications in India that are associated with several medical conditions. Some serious ailments are given primary consideration such as neurosurgery, heart problems, ophthalmic disorders and organ transplants.

REGISTRATION

- It is necessary for foreign nationals with 'M' visas and attendants with MX Visas to register themselves with the concerned Foreigner Regional Registration Offices (FRROs) within 14 days after their arrival in India.

VALIDITY AND EXTENSION

- Medical visa to India is given either for the duration of the treatment or for duration of a year, whichever is less.
- Extension of this visa up to another year is also possible on the orders of the state governments or FRROs, if recognised hospital in India gives a medical certificate.
- If more extension is needed then on the suggestion of the state government / FRROs coupled with suitable medical papers, the Ministry of Home Affairs can give a validation.



duration of e-Medical Visa shall be for six months and multiple entries for follow up and check-ups shall be considered. It is suggested that the responsibility to register the patient with FRRO within 15 days of the patient's arrival to the hospital should lie with the hospital authorities or the attendant who accompanies the patient on attendant visa.

PROMOTION AND MARKETING DIVISION

As of today, the Ministry of Tourism has not undertaken any focused marketing for wellness and medical tourism segment of India. Billa informed that though independent marketing and promotions have been undertaken by FICCI, Ministry of Commerce, PHD Chamber, all these initiatives have been scattered. He says that there is a need for clear strategy, dedicated marketing and campaign material to promote this segment and harness its potential better. "We have commissioned BBC to make a short film for this segment that will be used for its promotional activities. We will also target journals

that are believed to be read by doctors worldwide to market this segment directly to the target audience. We are also planning on attending events both national and international and making a pitch for this segment to be highlighted at the right platform," adds Billa.

ACCREDITATION OF HOSPITALS AND WELLNESS CENTRES

National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH) is the authority on recognising hospitals and wellness centres. Billa informs, "Kerala has its own accreditation for ayurveda hospitals and wellness centres but on a national perspective, we did not have unified guidelines. Since many travellers come for the detox and wellness category, we have asked NABH to consider a twin level policy to differentiate between hospitals and wellness clinics. The Wellness and Spa Association is also working on accreditations for Yoga centres and spas."

MEMBERS SAY...



The board is a progressive step which is bringing together all stakeholders from tourism, hospitality and medical healthcare sector to smoothen out difficulties faced by tourists coming to India.

K. NAGARAJ NAIDU
Member, National Medical and Wellness Tourism Promotion Board



The cost of the treatment, quality of medical facilities available and the post-operative treatment and care, are the fundamental drivers for this segment, all of which are quite favourable in India.

BHARAT MALKANI
Member, National Medical and Wellness Tourism Promotion Board



THE

Long before the world woke up to the practices in Yoga, it was in India that the yogic system found its fullest expression. In contemporary times, millions of discerning travellers come here to study this science to imbibe the true yogic way of life.

YOGIC

LIFE

Y

oga, derived from the Sanskrit word yuj, means union of the individual consciousness (soul) with the universal consciousness (spirit). An age old Indian practice, Yoga and meditation were designed to go together. Travellers can find an array of courses and treatments on Yoga and meditation in India, from five-star facilities to retreat centres in nature's lap.

SWASWARA- RECALIBRATE, RECONSTRUCT, RECOVER

Nestling atop a cliff overlooking the picturesque Om Beach, SwaSwara is a serene, secluded resort located on the fringes of Gokarna, a temple town in Uttara Kannada, Karnataka. A SwaSwara holiday is not an escape from the humdrum, instead it is an introduction to the inner song within each of us to recalibrate in order to reconstruct your life plan and recover from a burn out. A destination where luxury is time for yourself in nature to think, let go and to heal, as it is in absolute harmony with the land that nurtures her. Set in 26 acres of greenery with only 24 Konkani villas, inspired by the homesteads, tradition and craft of coastal Karnataka, each villa is built around a central open courtyard garden planted with herbs, making it a unique space where your senses awaken and open you up to the simple joys of life like never before. The offerings are drawn solely from Indian consciousness to make it a transformational holiday for you, an immersive combination of Yoga therapy, Ayurveda, Prakriti Chikilsa, art, pottery, nature supplemented by a healthy and holistic cuisine where the emphasis is on traditional, fresh and organic.

Facilities: A spacious and well-ventilated Yoga shala for the Asana classes, a circular, thatch roofed meditation hut for chanting and meditation sessions, outdoor Yoga venues, a 400 year-old Banyan tree for Yoga Nidra and Pranayama, the meditation hill with a thatched roofed two tiered space commanding a stunning 180 degree view of the Om Beach – ideal for sunrise meditations, the Yoga deck with a packed mud floor and thatch roof for asana sessions are spectacular offerings for a traveller who wishes to connect with nature and unwind.





Parmarth Niketan
(Here and Above)

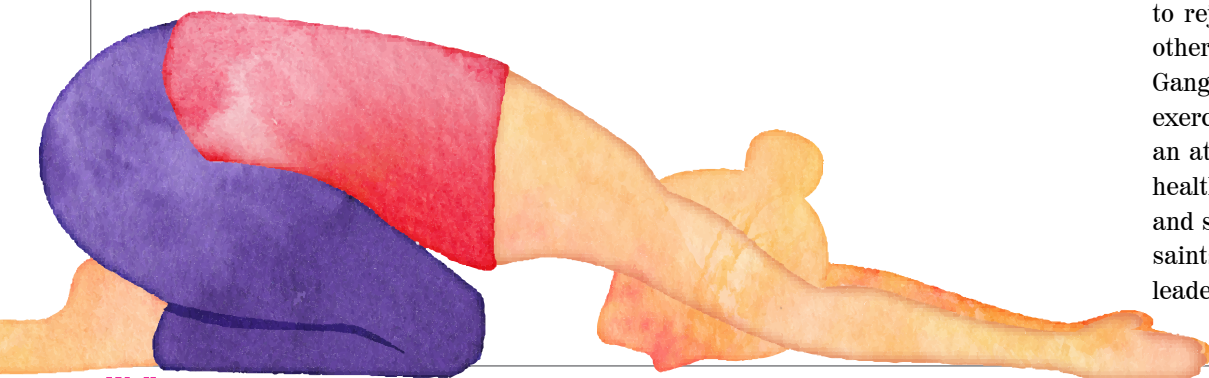
Programmes: Some of the signature programmes include Swa Wellbeing Holiday — signature programme, a wellness holiday which is a comprehensive programme with a flexible regime; Shanti with VanaVasa — A Yoga wellbeing retreat open from 8-10 nights which includes a three night stay at a unique space VanaVasa for a rewinding and mindful living experience; Swastha — a two week detox and cleanse program which is a unique combination of naturopathic and Ayurvedic principles, therapeutic diet and treatments; Prana — Ayurveda rejuvenation programmes of

different durations to cater to the specific health requirements of a guest like a 10 day SwaSwara Ayurveda Program for de-stressing and revitalising, an introduction to a healthy activity pattern and food habits built on the principles of Ayurveda to lead and maintain a healthy lifestyle; 14 day SwaSwara Ayurveda Program for deep therapeutic healing and relief from specific medical and health conditions; 21 day SwaSwara Ayurveda Program for a deep detox and cleanse for an all encompassing healing, eliminating toxins through some traditional Panchakarma procedures; Swa De-stress Retreat is an introduction to a healthy lifestyle for 3 nights.

PARMARTH NIKETAN

Parmarth Niketan is one of India's largest interfaith, Yoga and spiritual institutions. Parmarth Niketan, which means an abode dedicated to the welfare of all, is a true spiritual haven lying on the holy banks of river Ganga in the lap of the lush, green Himalayas in Rishikesh. Open to all, guests from across the world gather at Parmarth Niketan all year round to not only learn Yoga but delve into holistic healing.

Facilities: With a setting of an ashram, there are about 1000 residential rooms that retain the simplicity of living and yet are equipped with the necessary modern amenities. The daily activities at the centre include morning universal prayers to channelize the energy of the body, daily Yoga classes to rejuvenate and heal the body and mind. Various other activities like *kirtan*, the world-renowned Ganga *aarti* at sunset, as well as natural therapeutic exercises and Ayurvedic treatments allow tourists an atmosphere to reconnect with oneself and find a healthy balance in life. Frequently special cultural and spiritual programs are given by visiting revered saints, acclaimed musicians, spiritual and social leaders and others.





Shreyas Yoga Resort

Programmes: Various courses are offered to wellness tourists catering to all levels like Beginner Foundation Yoga, Beginner Intensive Yoga, Intensive Yoga, Kriya Yoga and Meditation, Spiritual Retreat, and Yoga Teacher Training. In addition, every year from March 1-7 Parmarth Niketan hosts the International Yoga Festival. In 2016 there were over 1200 in attendance during the week, representing 85 countries where more than 70 presenters from 20 countries offered nearly 150 classes.

SHREYAS YOGA RETREAT

Housed amidst a sprawling 25-acre oasis of green, Shreyas Yoga Retreat is a seamless blend of the modern and the timeless, luxury and simplicity, indulgence and enlightenment. It has been recognised as one of Top 10 finest Yoga retreats in the world. It provides the sacred space needed to retreat for a fulfilling, and purposeful life. However its beauty lies in providing access to Yoga at all levels of experience. Shreyas enables guests to integrate the manifold facets and benefits of Yoga into their daily lives without the austerity and rigor usually associated with 'ashrams'. Yoga at Shreyas is much more than simply the traditional physical postures and aims to provide numerous self discovery packages and retreats that aim at catalysing the thinking and living philosophy and harmonise it with the timeless wisdom enshrined within the Indian philosophical tradition.

Programmes: Yoga classes at Shreyas are based on classical Hatha Yoga and combined with Pranayama (breathing related) and Pratyahara (internalisation) processes drawn from the Yoga Sutras — ancient Yogic doctrine that aims to integrate our body, mind, heart and souls for complete living. Diverse and yet complementary activities are also offered ranging from Yoga asanas (hatha and ashtanga yoga), meditation, chanting of sacred mantras,

deep-relaxation sessions, body and breath awareness classes, volunteerism, community service, cooking classes, corporate social responsibility exercises, farming activities, city excursions, temple tours and visits to nearby places of interest (Mysore, Belur, Halebid, Shravanabelagola). All these are perfectly complemented by rejuvenating massages, organic vegetarian cuisine and a no-alcohol policy. Other facilities include an infinity pool, heated outdoor Jacuzzi, steam, gymnasium, spa, cricket net with professional bowling machine, library, home theater and jogging track.

Facilities: Offering guests a complete holistic experience, the Yoga, meditation and chanting sessions on one hand are perfectly balanced with a diet that is light, healthy and nutritious on the other. All meals served at Shreyas are made from organically grown ingredients freshly hand-picked from its fields. Meals served at Shreyas are gourmet vegetarian, from a variety of cuisines like Italian, Mexican, Oriental and Indian.

Travellers can experience various types of treatments which include Wellness for the Soul, Yoga Retreat, Ayurvedic Rejuvenation, The Joy of Giving, Weight Management and Silent Retreat, and vary in duration from 3 nights to 21 nights.

In their latest endeavours, a new spa is being constructed more akin to a wellness centre. The spa will have four dedicated ayurveda therapy rooms, all with their personal steam rooms. Panchakarma treatment is being introduced at Shreyas. Besides this, the spa will have four rooms for Western massages, two rooms for mud therapy and Thai massage, a separate Naturopathy section with three rooms for hydrotherapy, acupressure and acupuncture. Each spa room is positioned to offer spectacular views of the site/surroundings.



JUNE 2016



21 International Day of Yoga
India and Abroad

24 4th China International Medical Tourism Show
Guangzhou



JULY 2016

11 The Health Tourism Show 2016
London

AUGUST 2016

31 Medical Fair Asia 2016
Marina Sands, Singapore

SEPTEMBER 2016

1 3rd International Health and Wellness Tourism Congress
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic



3 3rd International India Medical Tourism Congress 2016
Hyderabad, India

9 Destination Health: Medical Tourism Trade Show
Ottawa, Canada

20 The 6th Oman Health Exhibition and Conference
Oman International exhibition Centre, Oman



21 International Russian Travel Mart- 12th International Exposition And Conference For Medical Tourism, Spa and Health
Moscow

25 9th World Medical Tourism & Global Healthcare Congress (WMTC),
Washington D.C., USA



30 Moscow Medshow
Moscow

OCTOBER 2016

3 Advantage Healthcare-India 2016
India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida, India



9 International Medical Travel Exhibition and Conference (IMTEC)
Dubai International Convention & Exhibition Centre, UAE



13 7th Medical Tourism Congress
Mexico, Puerto Vallarta



17 10th Annual Global Wellness Summit
Tyrol, Austria

NOVEMBER 2016

18 The 5th China International Medical Tourism Fair
China International Exhibition Centre, Beijing

22 World Medical Tourism Summit
The Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, UAE

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